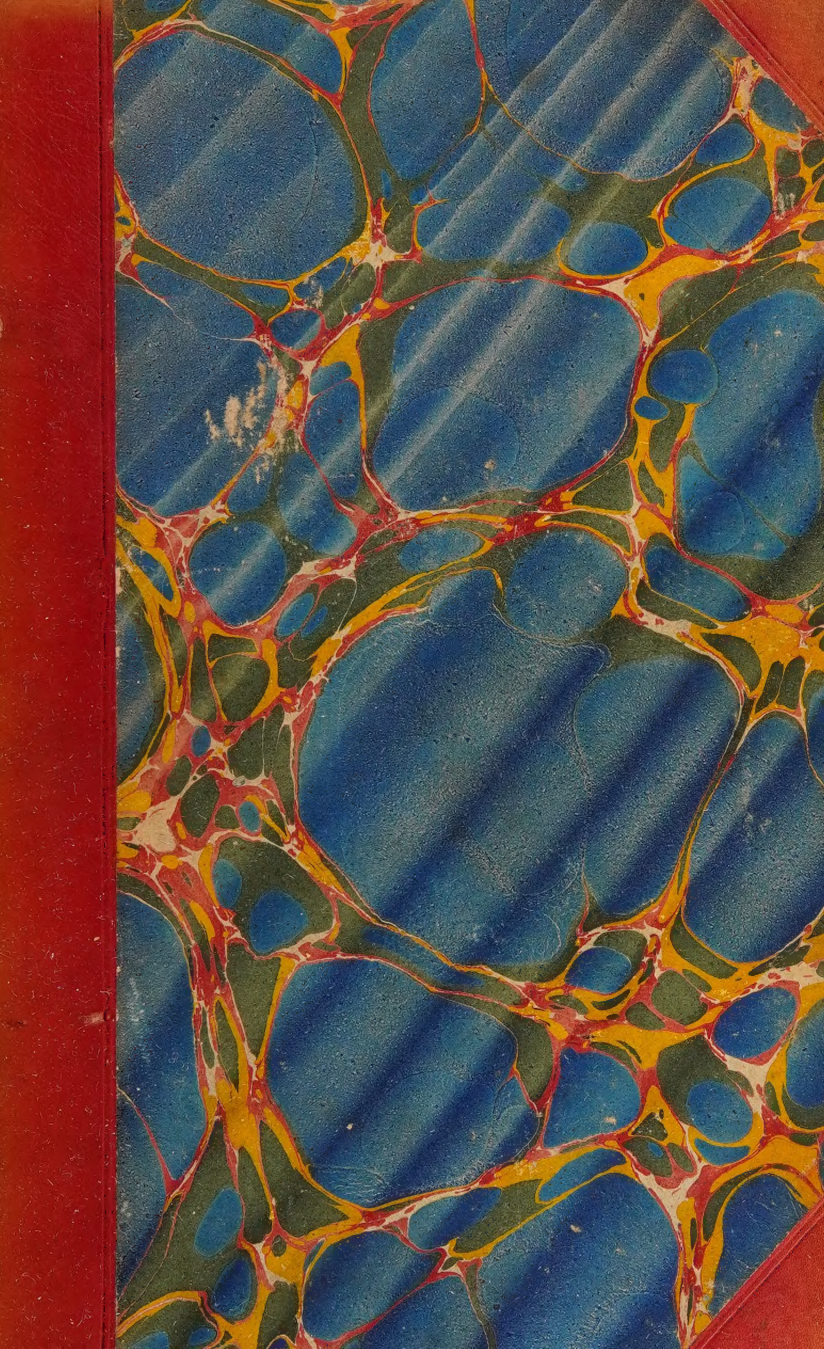

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THE

# SMUGGLER;

## A TALE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"TALES BY THE O'HARA FAMILY," "THE DENOUNCED," &c.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

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# THE SMUGGLER.

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MICHAEL MUTFORD had courageously declined a very princely offer of Mr. Lilly White, though, at the time, sorely tempted, by his necessities, almost by his despair, to accept it, and, we may remark, not prepared by former habits of reasoning to consider its acceptance, on his part, morally criminal, or even poetically disgraceful. The abiding pride of a conscious gentleman, and, notwithstanding all his late snarls or declamation, or innuendo against aristocracy, his family-pride, too, supplied the only, or the strongest motives for his refusal. Since so it was, that the world *did* look with a contemning eye upon the merchant who bought and sold at the

best terms he could—certain laws of his country not much considered in his arrangements—Michael would not submit himself, his father and sister, his name, to such a criticism. And branching out of this sentiment were some peculiarly personal; such as a shrinking back from a charge which would bring him in constant proximity, if not to an equality and an intimacy, with individuals like the honest Lilly White, his brother, and the flippant and full-dressed Misses Linnock: to say nothing of the lower degrees of Smugglers, male and female.

But his father's death, and his sister's and his own disgrace, wrung out of Mutford's breast all sensitiveness of family name and honour, and all care of acting with deference to either. His father could not now be made to blush by any contrivance of his to "get money:"—his sister and himself—and they were the last of their family—could not fall lower than they had fallen. He had no character to support in the world's regard: it would not now accord him the name of gentleman—(gentleman!)—he laughed bitterly, in his bitter heart, and vowed to that world to fling back the name of man, also, if it were to be held

according to the common acceptation of its meaning.

Such, at least, were the conclusions of his distempered mind upon the day when he rode with Bessy, at the back of the stage, far away from the sea-side villages. And before he took leave of her in her new residence, Michael had resolved to come to a second explanation with Lilly White; and when he told her of a necessity for exerting his "*genius*," in a fit arena, in order to provide for their common wants, it was not play-writing or novel-writing he meant, as she supposed, but sailing in the prosperous and fortunate Miss Molly, in bold defiance of blockade men and revenue cutters, a good sea dashing and foaming, and a good breeze whistling and piping around him.

After burying his father, and repairing to his friend Graves's Temple-chambers, he swore, lying down in bed, that he would *pay* Graves's brother, and Graves's self, all the money he had borrowed of them — "and in an honest way, too;" and that "honest way" was, to his then state of mind—smuggling.

But, before launching on his new and laudable career, Michael had also made up his

mind, as the letter (intended to have been posthumous) to Graves truly asserts, to follow the honourable George Allan to the Continent.

His pains, and the partial loss of the use of his limbs, which his exaggerating and *triste* anticipations unhesitatingly pronounced to be irremovable, came on, and he gave up both intentions, and, with them, the wish to live. He had laid down in bed,—a pistol, crammed with powder and small bullets, in each hand,—self-sworn to destroy himself when the watchman under his chamber-window should call the hour of one o'clock. He was saved — and in such a manner that the demon of suicide fled, awe-stricken and terrified, out of his wretched heart, leaving it free to receive, in a sudden and stormy influx, love of his friend and of his sister, the Christian's fear of God, and the resolve of a still desperate man to live on.

He made terms with his friend, in his chamber in the hotel, sincerely resolved to keep them. Graves and he parted at six o'clock next morning; Mutford taking the stage to the sea-side.

"When you see your poor sister, Michael, in the village to which this stage will bear you, do not stir from her side," said Graves.

" I will not," answered Mutford, laughing to himself.

" And harkee," continued Graves—" to bribe you to be a good boy, perhaps in a short time I may have some news to send you."

" Of what nature?"—demanded Mutford.

" Oh, that would be telling you the identical news, itself, which I am not quite at liberty—in fact, which at present I will not do, Master Michael."

The stage drove out of London. Mutford pondered, a moment, upon Graves's hint, but speedily put it out of his mind, as a mere nothing;—a little friendly expedient to keep him anxious about an object, and so divert him from a relapse into former evil thoughts.

" But he need not fear me, now. The pains have vanished, or nearly so; and why should I not, as a consistent, reasonable creature—" (here came another of Michael's inward laughs)—" fall back upon all the resolves of that night, before which they thought proper to seize upon me?—So—The Miss Molly a-hoy!—I only transpose my measures. My cousin George can wait awhile."

On the night to which he alluded, in this

reverie, when his vows were vowed to swear faith to the bunting of the Miss Molly, whatever might be its colour or colours, or supposing it only the colour of plain, coarse linen, Michael Mutford, as a first measure, wrote a letter to a very slight acquaintance of his at the sea-side. Prudently calculating that Mr. Lilly White might not now have need of his services, he wished to avoid the unnecessary humiliation, or call it merely trouble, of a personal interview with that chief of homely name, and he therefore applied, by post, to his prime-minister, to sound Lilly on the subject, and have an answer ready for him in a night or two, when he would call on her—for *her* it was, to wit, Martha Hugget,—at her own house, or else send her a message to meet him in its neighbourhood. And, not knowing Martha's address, Michael consigned this epistle to the care of Mas'r Fox: (and it may here be added that Sam Geeson's hint to Lord Lintern of the great probability of Mutford becoming visible in Mr. Linnock's house, in a few nights, was derived from the whispers that soon arose about the nature of that letter, after its arrival at its destination.)

Michael formed one of the seven vis-a-vis tra-

vellers at the back of the stage. His precisely opposite companion was a pretty girl, the lady's maid, probably, of some family from town, sojourning at the little watering-place to which the stage was rolling. She was as lively as pretty. His other fellow-voyagers, old, young, and middle-aged, were also not quite as morose, or as suspicious or fearful of one another as English stage-travellers generally are; but, for Michael, himself, he was the very soul and spirit of the party; and the man preferred of the pretty girl's dark hazel eyes, and her most attentive squire into the bargain; for which, upon occasions of descending and ascending, during the journey, he boldly asked, and was not cruelly refused some little tribute, at the back of the coach, out of view of coachee, and the other members of coachee's temporary family. And to his own ears, Michael's jest, and good things, and loud laugh, rang merrily, all along the road, until he wondered at himself, and began to flout himself for certain former misgivings of his incapability of cutting a figure among any number of people: — but, what would he have felt if he could have known, afterwards, that the pretty girl, and others of

his delighted audience of that day, often declared, in alluding to him, subsequently, that they were sure he was some young lord from Oxford? (the question asked, being, of course, only meant to apply to the limit of time during which his present fit continued on him.)

Outside the little sea-coast village, he descended from the coach. Evening had fallen. He repaired, stealthily, to Mas'r Fox's house. The door was secured; but lights streamed through the chinks of a window-shutter. He knocked, as Fox's titter, and that of some other person, came on his ear. All grew silent, within. He knocked again; no answer. Suspecting a certain something, he peeped through the chinks of the window-shutter; no person was situated within range of his eye. Getting impatient, he now assaulted the door in good earnest, and called on Fox by name, giving his own. A monkeyish cry of joyful recognition escaped his old friend, who presently opened the door, holding it, however, ajar in his hand.

"Welcome home to us, Mr. Mutford; I be blessed but I be glad to see you, *I* know: Well, Sir," he continued in a confidential whisper—"that old girl, as you knows about, Sir,

has the letter you sent her, according to all I hear from one o' the——"

"Confound them," cried Mutford, "can't they keep a secret better between them? Let me in, Mas'r Fox; I must rest a moment, here, while you go tell Martha I want to see her."

"Why, Sir, Martha's mother's house bay'nt so far of," hesitated Fox.

"And that's the very reason why it won't take you long to go there—What you don't like to let me in, a moment?" Mas'r Fox still held the door in his hand.

"I be blessed if I don't, then, Mr. Mutford —but—" as he left the way free, Mutford passed him—"but the place be so small, Sir, and all the young uns just gone asleep behind that curtain," pointing to an old counterpane, suspended on a line, which veiled one nook of the one apartment that made up Mas'r Fox's whole house—shop, parlour, and kitchen, by day, general dormitory, by night—"and I be blessed, if I ha'ant been forced to put them all asleep, myself, this night, and the last night, and more, Mr. Mutford; for my poor woman be gone on a little trip over to France, to buy French eggs for the shop; and after the last of 'em lay down,

here I was sitting, as you see, Sir, taking one little taste o' brandy and water, Sir, that moment when I heard you knocking so loud, and hollor-ing so."

"I see," assented Mutford, glancing at the little table, to which were *two* chairs, and which, along with the brandy-bottle, held *two* glasses—"I see; and why should you not, Mas'r Fox? every man is surely entitled to taste the sweets of his hard earnings; and no more industrious little man than you, do I know, to say nothing of your good, moral conduct, and your fear of the face of Mr. Boakes;—and—poor woman! —gone to France to buy French eggs?—and the poor little things left all alone to your care?"—Mutford, for a reason, had been cautiously edging towards the suspended counterpane; now he suddenly peeped behind it, saying—"Poor little dears!"—and Fox uttered, under his breath, a "I-be-blowed!"—while Michael added, "and, I do protest, Mas'r Fox, a very fine girl of her age the eldest is—" as, at the same moment he took by the hand, and assisted to her feet, the comely fresh-faced maiden of whose acquaintanceship with the fly-charioteer, mention has before been made, and

whom Mutford now discovered sitting at the foot of the pallet upon which lay, sound asleep, a brood of young Foxes, her back against the wall, and her knees crippled up into her mouth.

The little crabbed nature of Fox had a spark of spirit and quick temper in it, and, taken off his guard, he was about to yield to his mortification and spleen, and brazen and fight himself out of his present dilemma, as well as he could, but Mutford speaking on without a pause, turned away his wrath.

" An amazing finely-grown girl, indeed, and does you and Mrs. Fox, rearing and all, uncommon credit — Eh, pretty dear?—tell its name, won't it?—there, to be sure it will,—and not look as if it feared one were going to eat it, either—And how do you do, my precious?"—Mutford caressed the child—" very well, you thank me? There, there, sit down, and I will sit down with you, and while papa goes on a little errand for me, you'll say your ta, ta, to me; and I'll tell you pretty stories."—

" Well"—at length interrupted Fox, suddenly abandoning his anger and his gravity, together, as he responded the girl's silly laugh—" well, if ever I see, or heard tell of!——Mr.

Mutford, ye be what you be—as knowin' a hand as I ever——well, no matter; *I'll* say no more; little said bes' soonest mended; but"——

"You'll just run where I asked you, Mas'r Fox, without losing any more time—there, do—and never mind me, here,—me and the little ones; I'll take care of 'em for you.

"Jane,—" wavered Mas'r Fox, still grinning, and trying to catch her eye, which, by the way, Jane seemed not at present over-anxious to allow him to catch——"Jane, bayn't you a-coming for a run, too?"

"She!" answered Mutford—"at such a time of night? poor dear, no indeed; better for her to sit still, here, and keep quiet, in-doors, and so much wind abroad, and, I think, rain coming on—eh, Jane?"

"You be *such* a funny gentleman!" tittered Jane; and, perforce, Mas'r Fox continued tittering too, with, however, alternations, for an instant at a time, of gravity and suspicion in his face;—and, finally, at the repeated exhortations of Mutford to "skip!"—the little fellow, after grinning coldly again, and saying, "Well, I see how it be; *I* see;—well;"—he set off in a quick run from his own door, his head

poking down, his fists clenched, and his elbows squared, and jerking backward and forward in union with his motion and speed.

"Be quiet, now, Sir, will you?"—said the fair unknown to Mutford, immediately upon Mas'r Fox's departure—"hush!—I be blessed if I should at all wonder if there goes Lucy Peat, and the constables after her"—this was spoken in reference to a hubbub in the village-street, made up of loud talking, running feet, and the shrieks of a woman, at a distance. Mutford's bitter-hearted, and even to himself absurd and fantastical levity, abandoned him.

"Lucy Peat?" he said, shuddering at her name, as he arose from the table, and stood in the middle of the small apartment.

"Yes, Sir, Lucy Peat; the girl as was at service in your family, you know."

"I know;—and—constables after her!—why?"

His chance-companion briefly related, that, "ever since Mr. Boakes had taken Lucy home, they did not agree the best in the world; so far from it, that they quarrelled each other, night and day, cat-and-dog like; that Lucy had several times run out into neighbours'

houses to save herself from his blows, though, when Mr. Boakes followed her to fetch her in again, he protested, in the mildest manner, that he had never raised a hand to her, much less his foot, or the tongs, poker, or candlestick, as she averred; and that Lucy was only unsettled in her mind, and raved of all she said. However, so things went on between them, till this evening, a few hours ago, when Lucy ran out of his house, for good, crying out, like mad, in fore-right earnest, her eyes blackened, her head bleeding, and a dinner-knife in her hand; and when folk went in to see after poor Mr. Boakes, they found him very ill, indeed, from two great stabs in his side, and the doctor said he had little chance for his precious life."

Mas'r Fox returned from his mission, out of breath with haste, and the workings within him of many momentous interests. First, he had raced back as fast as he could in order that Mutford and Mrs. Fox's friend might enjoy their tête-à-tête the shortest time possible; next, he had to deliver himself of Martha Hugget's instructions; and lastly, he carried the latest tidings of Lucy Peat, having encountered the crowd who pursued her, and, notwithstanding

his energetic hurry, heard enough, and asked enough of them to make himself master of all they knew, had done, and intended to do.

And of Lucy Peat he first spoke, railing at her atrocious attempt upon the life of poor Mr. Boakes, in terms such as it merited, and giving his hearers to understand, that she had just been hunted out of a plantation in the neighbourhood, where she must have hidden herself some hours, and had now passed through the outskirts of the village, the constables and the crowd not very close upon her, however, and therefore not quite sure of her route—though, doubtless, she would soon be come up with, and secured.

Then Mas'r Fox took Mutford to the door, and whispered—"I be blessed, Sir, if that ere old girl bayn't too sensible and on her guard of an odd time: what d' you think? she will give no downright answer, nor budge from her mammy's fire-side, nor let you go there to speak with her, if you don't send, first of all, a line in writing that will make her sure you be the very man she can and ought to appear to in the present business."

Mutford wrote on a slip of paper—

"Martha, my good girl.—By the flower-bed —the hole in the wall—the black beard of our Lilly, and the white nob of the farmer, I am he."—And this he sealed carefully and handed to Fox.

In a few moments the little (almost winged) Mercury galloped back, and again whispered in Mutford's ear——"All be right, Sir: along the clifft."

"How soon?" demanded Mutford.

"Directly," answered Fox, his little grey eyes glittering towards the now sulky-looking damsel at the table, who, her fair cheek leaning on her hand, was contemptuously and unobservantly sipping a mere trifle of brandy and water.

"Are you sure?" again asked Michael;—he had noticed and understood the glance of Mas'r Fox, and doubted that his own personal comforts might possibly be sacrificed to a reasonable wish to get rid of him, quietly. But Fox "blessed" and "blowed" himself many times over, if he did not utter the very instructions he had received; if, in fact, Mutford had a moment to lose, unless he wanted to keep "*that old girl* a-waiting."

"Good night, then, Mas'r Fox, and take care of the little uns, till the French eggs come home," said Mutford, as he left the house, laying his hand solemnly on the little man's shoulder, and glancing towards a third person.

"Oh, cum, now, cum, Mr. Mutford," grinned Fox, "you know you be putting upon me, this way—Jane, 'tis time you were a-helpin' mother to put her own young uns to bed—for you see, Mr. Mutford, Jane's mother" — growing serious—serious *for him*—"Jane's mother just sent her across, here,——"

"I know it, well; good night!" interrupted Mutford; and running from the door, almost as fast as its proprietor had done, he was, in a few minutes, striding over the well-known shingles which lay under the steps that led to the gradually ascending path to the cliff.

Notwithstanding the absurd hurry in which, even according to a plan, he endeavoured to keep his mind engaged, his present situation, and every object around, tempted him, by degrees, into recurrences he had sworn to avoid. Arrived in view of the rude steps, he was at first surprised into a vivid recollection of the fate of poor Moffit, and his eye wandered to the buttress

from behind which had peered the legs of the observant man of war's man, who subsequently slew his polite old friend, and then to the point where the boats had come in, that memorable morning, and then to the spot where the victim of revenue-justice had fallen dead. Mutford stood still, and conjured up the whole scene: the Lieutenant and his men running down the steps; Sam Geeson, then seen for the first time, braving the blockade guard; Sam Geeson, the friend of Lucy Peat; Lucy Peat, the destroyer, or one of the destroyers of his sister!—here was the first forbidden link touched by the spark of association, and, to the last link of the dark chain it then shot along. That last was his father's grave:—his father's grave so near him, at this moment, and yet about to be passed by him unvisited,—and about to be passed, perhaps, for the last time.—Mutford turned his back on the sea-cliff, and walked rapidly in another direction.

The church-yard, to which he bent his steps, was at all times of the day and night to be entered by means of a turn-stile gate. He was soon standing over the heap of fresh earth he sought. A minute after, he was on his knees, his arms encompassing it.

"Michael Mutford?" questioned a hard though low-keyed voice, close to him, after he had for some time indulged his feelings. He jumped up. A man muffled in a cloak stood directly opposite to him, on the other side of the grave.

"Yes; Michael Mutford," he answered—"and who calls him by his name?"

"One who has a right to demand of you—Where and how have you disposed of the Lady Ellen Allan?"

"Disposed of the Lady Ellen Allan?" repeated Michael, speaking very slowly—"disposed of *her!*" He broke into a laugh:—"Again I ask who stands there before me?"

"Her father."

"Ay!"—Mutford's foot was on his parent's grave, that, from it, he might spring on his hated enemy. He suddenly checked himself, and fell back, some paces, saying—"Begone! leave me! leave me here, alone!—*here!*—it is not *here* we should meet—it is not *here* you should come to dare me!—What brings you here?—what!" he continued, losing command of his reason—"to shoot me on that spot?" pointing to the grave—"to stretch his son,

there—while he lies below !—or to tear him out of his last resting-place ! to rob the grave of its poor tenant ! You cannot sleep in your bed while even his bones——"

"Patience, patience, Sir," interrupted Lord Lintern; "none but a madman could assume that I come here on any such intents: this is not the language we should use to each other—patience, I say."

"Stop where you are !" Mutford broke in, in his turn—"on your life, do not stir a step !"—Lord Lintern was about to approach him nearer—"*that—that—*" again motioning towards the grave—"*that* is between us *as* you stand—and if I will not cross it, to *you*, do not you cross it, or pass it, to *me !*—Do not !—Leave me here, alone I say !—or—since you will not—no, no !—" after a black struggle with himself of a moment—"no !—I leave *you*, here alone !—'tis better,—'tis better—"

"Madman, indeed," muttered Lord Lintern, as Michael turned his back and ran out of the churchyard; and not many minutes had passed, before Mutford flung himself down, upon the cliff path, a good distance beyond the village, where he lay panting and exhausted, over-wrought in body and mind.

A girl's voice, singing, at a little distance, and in a low key, made more imperfect by the dashing of the sea beneath him, and the hard blowing of the wind about him, aroused Mutford into observation. The singer evidently came nearer, for he could soon catch a few lines—

"Oh, Melony, oh Melony,
Thou art the fairest creature"—

He lay still. Two girls approached, one almost a child· she addressed her companion, who had been singing, in a pettish tone—

"I be blessed alive, Martha, if you bayn't been putting on me, all this while, about Bill; he never gave you no such messages for me, and I know he didn't."

"Come, my maid, come; don't you go for to be foolish, now," answered Martha.

"An', I wunt, then; and that's the very reason as why I be not a-going to let you make me a fool, no more: tisn't Bill, at all, I say; but some 'un you want to make up to, on your own account, Martha Hugget: an' so—"

"Jane, my maiden, don't go home, this time, at least; do stay beside o' me,—do;—and suppose I have a sweetheart, as well as you, Jane, and that we could come on 'em, both

together, or one after t'other, what harm 's in that, I be glad to know?—there 's my pretty maid; do walk a bit on with me, — I don't like coming out to see folk, alone, no more than you do, yourself, Jane."

" *I* never said as how *I* didn't," remarked Jane: — " But stop — who is sitting on the path?"

Mutford had half raised himself from his reclining position.

" Mine or yours, Jane?" questioned Martha; " come along, and let 's see."

She took the girl's hand, and approached Mutford. In coming close to him, she said— " Good night"—in an indifferent voice; then let Jane go on a few steps, while she added, in a whisper—" The flower-bed?"—

" And the hole in the wall," answered Mutford.

" Ask us the way to Mr. Linnock's, then"— She tripped after her beguiled companion, humming—

" 'Tis all of these poor smugglers,
Who now in gaol do lie;
Their wives and children left at home,
And fearing they must die—"

Taking the hint, Mutford stood up, followed the two girls, overtook them, and made the inquiry which had been suggested to him. Martha replied that it was a good step to Mr. Linnock's house, for any one who did not know the short cuts across the fields, after turning away from the cliff. He said he was quite unacquainted with these short cuts, and asked her to describe them. She pretended to do so, in a clear manner; but when Mutford assured her he could not venture a foot of ground upon his comprehensions of her statistics, he only said the truth. Then came, naturally, his earnest request to be conveyed within view of the house by his present companions: his business with Mr. Linnock he declared to be urgent: he was fatigued, as well as ignorant of the path-road; and, in fact, he would be very thankful for the favour he required.

Martha, after consulting Jane, and calling on her to say if either of them would think much of the walk, to oblige the civil gentleman, and getting a favourable answer, cheerfully agreed to guide Mutford to his destination. All then moved on together. Martha and Jane began to walk briskly: Mutford kept up with

them with difficulty; and at last Martha perceived he was, indeed, fatigued,—so much so that his steps were uneven.

"Gentlemen bayn't used to lean on poor girls' arms," she then remarked—"though, in case of need, girls' arms might help 'em;—see, Jane, how tired he be;—and so, Sir, here 's one of mine for you, and this pretty maiden will give you another, *I* know."

Jane, tittering at the novelty, the importance, indeed, of her approaching situation, gleeishly, though sheepishly extended her little arm, bent tight at the elbow, and Mutford proceeded on his walk, supported, at either side, by her and Martha Hugget. He allowed, nay, urged himself to enjoy this little adventure, and talked in a good-humoured strain with his two guides.

In a strain of regulated good-humour, however; one not at all resembling that in which he had indulged with the pretty lady's maid, on the top of the stage, nor with the yet nameless maiden, at Mas'r Fox's. There was, in Martha's manner, even in her frankness and lightest prattle, something which prescribed a peculiar respect towards her. Little silly Jane Simmons was nobody: but were Mutford alone with Martha

Hugget, in his most buoyant time of life, he could not have trifled with her, as young men will now and then do with village damsels.

Her character, so far as he knew it, by her conduct and actions, also had an influence upon him. Her devotion to her young Fred—("Might he not have sung to her at parting"—asked Michael of himself, sillily—yet characteristically—

> "My heart with love is beating,
> *Transported*——"

and there stopped short:)—her respectable government of herself, with regard to other men, since he had been snatched from her; and her determination to forsake her friends and country, in order to partake his lot in a remote land, and in, at least, a questionable situation: all this, a knowledge of which Mutford had derived from the worthy Mr. Linnock, put the girl in no common-place light before him. He felt that he should like to know more of his young friend, Martha; of the bases of her principles, in fact.

A little occurrence afforded him opportunity for partially gratifying his wish. As they

passed near the edge of the cliff, which now was of great depth below them, Jane Simmons suddenly stopped an instant, and pointing down to the shingles said, "There, Martha," expressively.

Martha as suddenly looked towards the spot whither her young friend pointed, and averting her head, answered, with a quick, short sigh—"Ay, Jane."

Mutford also looked, but saw nothing, though, in the clear moonshine which sheeted the sea and the shingles, he must have discovered any remarkable object. All passed on—and he asked—"What was that?"

"Nothing Sir, nothing," replied Martha.

"Nothing *now*, Sir," added Jane.

"But *was* there any thing there, when you pointed, my little maiden?"

"No, Sir; only Martha remembers the spot so well."

"Nonsense, now, Jane Simmons."—Mutford, mistrusting the tone of her voice, peered into her eyes: there were tears in them. He came upon a certain conclusion, but, for sometime, took no advantage of it. He waited till the sharp breeze blew right from Jane to

Martha, and then said in a tone which the younger girl could not catch——"It was there that poor Fred, along with others, had the row with the man-o'-war's-men."

He felt her start, and then she looked up into his face, but was silent.

"I know it all," he continued, "and it is not to hurt you, Martha, that I mention it, for I like you for your constancy to the poor lad."

"He deserves it, Sir," at length replied Martha, in the same low tone which Mutford used; "there was not as good a boy in the village: and he deserves more from me, and will get it, if I live."

"I think I know what you mean, now, too," resumed Mutford; "a friend of yours has hinted it to me; and Martha, if indeed you do *that*, or even have a strong intention to do it, at present, I will call *you* the best *girl* in the village."

"What, Sir?"—asked Martha.

"Go to poor Fred."

"I say again, as sure as I live to do it, I will, then, and think it nothing uncommon to do either."

"Is he aware of your intention?"

"He be, Sir, since the hour he left England?"

"Have you heard from him, since?"

"Often, Sir; I have a letter of his in my pocket this moment, and it came to me yesterday."

"You have? well then, Martha, only that lovers' letters are to be peeped into by no one but lovers, I would make a little request of you."

"To let you see what kind of letters we write to one another, Sir?"

"Yes—and what kind of a letter Fred can write to you who so well deserve a good one, every day in the week."

"You can read it, Sir, as soon as we get to Mr. Linnock's: I bayn't ashamed to show it, either on Fred's account or my own, since you give yourself the trouble of thinking about us, Mr. Mutford."

"I am sorry he ever——" Mutford stopped short, for several reasons,—one of them personal: he felt he had no right to be sorry that Fred had done what he himself was going to do. But Martha took him up.

"Ever went a-smuggling, Sir. So be I. And yet, that be one o' the very reasons why I think as I do about him. For I be sure, it was for my sake—to make himself rich enough for our coming together—that Fred took to t'other trade, when times grew bad with his own, Sir."

"Martha, I am curious to learn one thing. Did Fred often visit Mr. Boakes's chapel?"

"Never as I know of, Mr. Mutford, but always came with mother and me, sometimes to church, sometimes to the Wesleyan chapel, the same as mother and me do, at present."

"And, either in one place or the other, have you never heard it said that Fred's new trade, and mine that is to be, was any harm?"

"Yes, sir, but never was brought to believe it. And I don't see why, if I believe other things I have heard at church or meeting, I be bound to believe that."

"Why, those that ask you to believe those other things, ask you to believe that, also."

"I know as they do, Sir; but be they attorneys or parliament men, as well as good preachers? and though not as good a preacher as they be, bayn't I, maybe, as good an attorney on this

head? haven't I the right to be? haven't I a better right than they have? cause why, I be poorer than they be."

"But we all certainly break through a law that is in the statute-book, Martha, while going on with our t'other trade."

"I, for one, never put it, there, Sir, nor never gave my good will to *have* it put, there;" answered Martha; "and I would say, up to their faces—and I said the same thing, once, up to the faces of some o' them—there is no right on their side, by good law, or good Bible, to send a young man across the wide seas, from his family and his country, for doing only what Fred did: and that's the foreright of all I know about it."

"Bad argument, Martha," said Mutford to himself, "though I am not sure I could give as good, in exculpation of my own present adhesion to your honourable trade, inasmuch as, I fear, my conscience—and something else are not so easy on the question.—But what's in the wind now?" he asked aloud. They had just

* This conversation is fact, for which none but Martha, and those who agree with her, are accountable. It may do no harm to let others know it *is* fact.

struck a little inland from the cliff, and gained the almost flattened summit of the point, more than once before described to the reader. Turning their backs to the three remarkable rocks called the Three Williams, they were about to descend into a spacious valley, the shortest way to Mr. Linnock's house. In this situation, distant shouts, and bellowing voices, reached them from the cliff-path which they had quitted, and, as they turned to look behind them, the shrieks of a single person, kept up nearly without a pause, came on in the same direction, but much nearer to the listeners. Mutford looked keenly along the path, and saw the figure of a woman running, and sometimes dancing or jumping towards him and his companion. While he watched her, he felt the two girls at his either side, press close to him, and draw back, while Jane responded the wild woman's shriek, and Martha, drawing in her breath, said—"Lucy Peat, as I be a born living girl!—Turn, Mr. Mutford, and let us not wait for her—let us run from her! I be dead afeard to face her!"

"She has her hand fast shut on the knife, ever since!" added Jane, beginning to run fast.

Martha seconded her, and Mutford, perforce, ran too.

"Stop! stop!" cried the hoarse voice of Lucy, gaining upon them, every instant, while the more distant shouts and clamour of her pursuers also grew more fiercely loud—"stop and save me! I know who ye be! I know you, Mr. Michael Mutford, and you, Martha Hugget! ye passed me, a minute ago, while I lay alone, a-hiding!—stop, I say, and save me from them! they will hear you speak for me, Mr. Michael, and you, too, Martha, for you was always good, and they like you! Stop, or have my life to answer for! Stop, or I jump over the cliff!—Stop, stop!"

Mutford hesitated at this appeal. The girls, in terrified expostulation, strove to drag him on. Thus, Lucy had time to gain on them; and, in fact, before they supposed her so near, she raced past them, confronted them, and at the same instant, sprang upon Mutford, and clasped him round the body. Jane Simmons ran to meet her pursuers, uttering loud cries; Martha Hugget, snatching at the wrist of Lucy's right hand, said—"Would you murder him, too?"—Mutford, by using all his strength, was

just able to disengage her arm from his body, and hold her off.

"Murder him? harm him? no, Martha Hugget—I have harmed him, enough, already—him and his! I know it, now—and I know, too, that if there be the God above you say there be, I am punished for it, this night!"—As Lucy said these words, she was kneeling at Mutford's feet, wringing her hands—(Jane had not spoken truth about the knife) and sometimes rolling and writhing on the grass—"but, Mr. Michael," she continued, "for all that, I cry out to you to save me!—Hark!—they be a-coming very near! Oh, do not let them take me, and tie me, and send me, in the cart to gaol! tell them I be mad! and I do think I be! I do hope I be! —Oh, speak to them—for I *see* them now! and catch me by the arm, and you, good Martha Hugget, catch me by the t'other arm!—save me, save me!"

"Hold her fast, there! hold her fast!" cried voices close behind.

"Will ye, will ye, will ye!" rejoined Lucy again clinging to Mutford with one arm, and seizing Martha's hand with the other.

"Wretched creature!—" cried Mutford, a

second time putting her off—"I forgive you—I pity you—but how can *I*—how can any one save you, if you have murdered the man!"

"Lay hands on her!"—repeated the pursuers.—

"Well then!" Lucy started up, and continued speaking while she ran, in an oblique direction, to where the cliff was highest, and a sheer precipice—"if ye will not—ye who are good people, ye who are good Christians—see what I can do, to save myself—I, Lucy Peat, who never believed in God or devil—see this!"—She ran to the very verge of the cliff; Mutford, now mingled with her hunters, and—all crying out in horror, and pursuing her fast, but yet not close to her—she ran to the very verge of the cliff, and prepared to jump;—it seemed that fear checked her—she stopped a few seconds;—then, turning her back to the sea, and her face to the yelling crowd,—her heels still on the crumbling edge of the precipice,—she bent backwards, waved her hands twice or thrice round her head, and as Mutford almost touched her skirts, disappeared. He and all around him stood still, in sudden silence, as if listen-

ing; but no cry was heard; and no buffet; nothing — so great was the fall; nothing to overmaster the blustering wind, on that high point, where not even a dash of the sea ascended.

In the wild solitude, in the clear moonshine, all continued standing silent, even after the time had elapsed within which they ought to have counted upon hearing any thing. Then they looked into one another's eyes, and some, Mutford along with them, held, hand by hand, and peered over the cliff. But this was idle. In the shadow at the cliff's base, so far beneath, no object of any kind could be distinguished. Mutford had thought he might probably catch a stir upon the rocky shingles; but that was even a more erroneous calculation. The men, girls, and children, who had hunted the poor fugitive to the cliff's bourne, went home, in groups, talking among themselves, in whispers. Mutford stood alone upon the very spot where Lucy's feet had last rested. For many minutes he stood there, bound to it, in horror, terror, stupefaction.—Pity softened and relieved him, and clasping his hands, and resting his head upon them, he said aloud—"Poor, neglected,

untaught one! child of a father and of a mother who disowned you! pupil of parish love and charity! I forgive you. And so will she whom you have also injured."

He then turned from the cliff. Martha Hugget and Jane Simmons were watching him from a distance. He joined them, and all pursued their way to Mr. Linnock's.

Approaching the old farm-house by a private path, that led to its rear, our friends saw a man lounging against a stile over which they had to mount. They paused, at Martha's instance. The person also seemed to have observed them; for putting his large figure in motion, he came slowly towards them. Martha looked sharply forward, at the distance of about twenty yards, and gaining full confidence, said—"All be right, Mr. Mutford: 'tis the friend as you're come to see; belike," slightly pressing his arm—"belike, Sir, he expected to meet you, on this path."

Greetings were, indeed, soon exchanged between Mr. Linnock and his former acquaintance, and no sovereign ever gave to a newly-named premier, in a first audience, a more gracious one than the gentle Smuggler vouchsafed to Michael Mutford.

"And you must be tired, Sir, after your long walk," continued Mr. Linnock, "you and those little maidens as have come to show you the way—so—step you, Martha, into the house, with Jane Simmons, first of all, and see if you cannot come upon nothing nice—no, Jane will go alone, while I say a word to you here, for a minute—there, my pretty maid, that 's the way:—And now, Mr. Mutford, tired as you are, you'll excuse me telling Martha two words that she ought to hear—I may have no better opportunity, 'tis such a busy night, in doors, Sir, and not expected so soon."

"A run-in, to-night, again, Mr. Linnock?" asked the attentived an business-like Martha.

"I be blessed, ay, old girl, and, as you know, we didn't reckon on it for a night or two."

"And all safe, Sir?"

"All in the very house, Martha: and so, Mr. Mutford, we be as busy and as merry within, as folk can well be—just what I told you; with other matters, too, to keep us alive; but we shall speak of them, presently; and, Martha, 'tisn't that news, alone, I have for you, old girl; but, hearkee—and never mind

Mr. Mutford,—he and I have chatted about you, afore now—harkee, Martha—there 's news from *beyond there*, too."

" Another letter, Mr. Linnock ?"

" No, Martha: guess again."

" I ha'ant got no other guess to make, Sir," answered Martha, her voice faltering.

" Did nobody never write you word, Martha, when you wrote to him of going to see him, that, if he could, he would hinder you, and that, in spite of all the great 'uns and all the sharp 'uns—where there 's a will, there 's a way, my maid ?"

" Bless my heart, Mr. Linnock, what is it as you do mean?" questioned Martha, sitting unconsciously, sinking, indeed, upon a large stone which was behind her, and taking off her little bonnet, and holding it on her knees, in the same absent manner, while her hands shook, and her lips trembled, and her eyes were fixed on her patron.

" Don't you go for to make any great things of a bit of a fuss, now, Martha, for your own sake, and for another body's sake, and you shall soon know what I mean," continued Mr. Linnock: " hollaring out in this place, and this

night, in particlar, or swounding, or such like, wouldn't be the way to keep him safe from the knowledge of one body I don't much like as should be able to tell any thing about him;—and that one body I mean is Sam Geeson, who is not turning out a fore-right good'un, as you shall soon hear of, too; and so, my maiden——"

"Mr. Linnock," interrupted Martha, "hollaring out, or swounding, be not my way, when to have one's mind about one would be a better way—But won't you tell me, Sir, in one word, is it of—" she looked round her, stooped her head forward to Mr. Linnock, and ended in a whisper—"of Fred you be talking?"

"Of Fred and no other, my old girl—he was seen at t'other side of the briny, this morning."

"In France, Sir?"—continued Martha, clasping her hands.

"In France, at Boulogne—and master-mate had a word with him; and Fred only asks you, now, to cross a *short* sea to him—you, and old mother together,—and there you three can live as safe, and grow as rich as archbishops, every one doing a hand's turn, now and then, for an old friend, the Miss Molly. I shouldn't be downright glad to lose you for good, at both

sides o' the water, Martha, my maiden." The sagacity and laudable attention to his own interests, of Mr. Linnock, were slightly discernible through the good-feeling and philanthropy of this little speech.

"Poor Fred, poor lad!" said Martha, "and so, you be in France, so near me; and what a many precious troubles you must have had the heart to face and overcome, to get there:—in France, to-night," she repeated, turning her head in the direction of the sea.

"I didn't say that," rejoined Mr. Linnock.

She turned her head round again, quickly, and asking, in a long-drawn manner—"No?"—her eyes, glittering in the moonlight, again were fixed on Linnock.

"No, Martha; not downright: he may have stolen over, to-night, for what I know."

"But *don't* you know, Sir?"

"Why, I be blessed, Martha, but if you do promise——"

"Oh, nons'ns, now, Sir, nons'ns," she stood up and leaned on him, for she trembled more than ever, "you know you've no call to be afeard of me, in regard of all that; and so, do, Mr. Linnock, pray, pray do, Sir."

"Stop a bit, then—" Mr. Linnock whistled.

Young Fred jumped over a fence, near to them, and came on slowly enough, to Martha, his head falling down, and his left hand in his trousers' pocket. Martha, after a little start, parted from Mr. Linnock, and, in her turn, advanced in a regulated pace, though not quite so deliberately, to meet him, half way. It did seem, indeed, that Mr. Linnock's fears and remonstrances were thrown away. Notwithstanding her evidently strong and sincere attachment, and the unexpected joy she must have experienced, Mutford only observed, that her eyes suddenly filled with tears, and that a spasmodic smile worked her features.

They came close to one another, each holding out the right hand, and Fred, looking ashamed of his, although his face denoted deep-felt pleasure. Their hands joined, and Martha said, " Be it you, Fred ?"

And Fred answered, " Ay, old girl, it *be*."

And such was *the scene* of a re-meeting, under the known circumstances, between two real English lovers of humble degree. Martha, indeed, improved it, a little, upon second thought. While they still held each other's right-hand, she put up her left to her eyes,

and, with the knuckles of it, scooped out the tears that, to her great shame, *would* make way through her closed lids; and, in the midst of this occupation, she, all of a sudden, flung down her left hand, opened her eyes wide, stretched forward her neck to Fred, pouted out her lips, and kissed his lips so snatchingly and energetically, that he staggered back a pace, quite taken off his guard.

"There," said Mr. Linnock, "there, that will do; and now, my maiden."

"Mr. Linnock!" interrupted Martha, "his life be in danger, in England, to-night!"

"Not if you go by what I'll tell you," replied Mr. Linnock; "take him, you know where, out of Sam Geeson's sight, for a few hours, and be you ready, then, to run across to France, old mother and you, as I said before, with him, and the thing is done, just as you heard me say it would be, Martha, my maid."

"Very well; let's see," said Martha.

"Good b'ye, then. Come, Mr. Mutford, we are bound for the house, now; and before speaking on your own little business, I will have to ask your advice in settling rather a disagreeable affair in-doors."

The disagreeable affair Mr. Linnock stated on their way to the house. An industrious woman of the sea-side village was in the habit, he said, of getting a cheap passage in the Miss Molly, to buy French eggs for her shop, and perhaps, at the same time, turn an honest penny in any other way she could.

"I comprehend," observed Mutford, "and I believe I know the industrious woman's name, too—'tis Fox?"

Mr. Linnock agreed, and went on to say that she had landed, with her little cargo, that very night, nigh at hand.

"Indeed?" queried Mutford, his mind glancing back to the state in which he had seen her house about two hours ago,—"and proposes to sleep under her own roof, to-night?"

"Yes," Mr. Linnock said, "directly a little accident could be arranged for her, she would put her eggs and herself upon a cart, in waiting, and make all speed to surprize her little husband, who could not be supposed to expect her home for some nights to come."

Mutford's mind permitted the only relief it had experienced since he left the cliff, as he said to himself, "Mas'r Fox, Mas'r Fox, the sly; prepare thyself!"

"And now to the point," continued Mr. Linnock. "This poor woman, while the Miss Molly was working off to-night, had been robbed of her purse; had acquainted the Miss Molly's proprietor with her loss, appealing to him to see justice done to her; and, Mr. Mutford would observe, here was a case of some difficulty and delicacy; the Miss Molly's character for honour and honesty at stake, as well as an industrious creature plundered of what she could ill afford to lose; and, in fact, it must be seen about."

"Had she named any person as the probable thief?" Mutford asked.

"Yes—a person of whom Mr. Linnock had more than once spoken to-night, in no approving language; Sam Geeson, in fact. He had not been across with the Miss Molly, this time, but had run down from the village to give a hand to work her. It was he who helped Mrs. Fox from the lugger into a boat; and it was in the boat she missed her purse, quite sure that she had had it safe in her pocket while aboard a moment before.

"What did Geeson say?"—"Nothing," Mr. Linnock replied; "for he had not yet been spoken with on the subject, and, to the present

moment, suspected nothing;" now, however, Mr. Linnock proposed to wile him into the house, and quietly hear what he might have got to say; and he requested Mutford's presence during the investigation. Meantime the worthy parent of the Miss Molly and her little crew, had his own misgivings of the 'prentice. It was not the first time he had been strongly suspected of an admiration of other people's accompaniments, nay—and Mr. Linnock shuddered while he said it of one in his employment —there was not positive proof that Sam was perfectly ignorant of all the circumstances of certain burglaries which, to the disgrace as well as terror of the county, had lately been perpetrated in his neighbourhood.

Mutford and his patron gained the little low-arched door leading into the farm-house. There, sitting upon a large hamper, while another, as also some bundles and packages, stood piled behind her, sat a tall stout woman, well muffled in a cloak and shawls, and with a handkerchief tied over her bonnet till it met under her chin. It was the distressed Mrs. Fox. Linnock saluted her by name, and told her he was about to see justice done to her. He would send out for her in a minute.

They entered the house. Its master led the way into the same little parlour-of-business which was the first room Mutford had made acquaintance with in the mansion upon a remarkable night. Ere he had quite crossed its threshold, the door of a more hospitable apartment opened, a well-known fair and freshly-red face, half-hidden in luxuriant ringlets of fair hair, and two still fairer shoulders, as full dressed as ever, darted through it; and the next instant he was tripped up to, with a pretty little musical shriek of delight, and his hand and arm were thrice shaken—the operator rising on her toes at each shake—and welcomed again and again. This would have been extremely flattering, had not Mutford's self-depreciating evil genius remarked to him that there was now no handsome and athletic Lieutenant Graves at his side. However, he allowed none of this want of spirit to appear, but responded, in act and word, to the distinguished greeting,—like the way, he believed, in which Miss Eliza thought every gentleman of courage ought to do.

Warned, good-humouredly, by her sage father, that there was business to be attended to for a moment, Miss Eliza then tripped and fluttered back to the room of the piano, con-

tented to live on the hopes of seeing her visitor soon again. Mr. Linnock left Mutford alone in the parlour, to seek Sam Geeson.

They came into Mutford's presence, conversing together on indifferent subjects. Evidently the cautious old Smuggler had not yet whispered Mrs. Fox's name to the 'prentice; in fact, he feared to give Sam an opportunity of conjuring any thing off his person.

The door closed, and salutations having been exchanged between Sam and Mutford, business commenced in reality. Mr. Linnock repeated Mrs. Fox's charge, distinctly, and suddenly, and briefly. The accused, wincing very little, if at all, laughed sturdily at it. Mrs. Fox was then called in; she upheld Mr. Linnock's story. Sam still asserted his innocence, and began to bluster. The bland Mr. Linnock addressed to him a fatherly and touching speech. He pointed out how absolutely necessary it was to satisfy Mrs. Fox, in some way, before *she should make her complaint to another tribunal;* in which view of the case the interests of a good many were concerned.

"I knows that, Mas'r Linnock," said Sam expressively. Mr. Linnock went on. He re-

minded the accused that the fair character of the Miss Molly, and of all the persons, and the whole concern connected with her, were at stake; and he besought one of her youngest children to lay that to his heart, and act as it would suggest to him to do.

"And what 's axed of me, Mr. Linnock—" Sam grew a little respectful again — "more than I've done? to tell you and she I knows nothing about it?"

Mr. Linnock, under all the circumstances, was sorry to say that he thought the 'prentice ought to submit to be searched, on the spot.

"He be jiggered if he would, then."

That did not look well, Mr. Linnock observed: and it might make Mrs. Fox more than ever inclined to go before a magistrate.

"Let her; and let *her*, and all who advise her to go, get all the good they can by it."

"I do not care for your threats to myself, Sam, where honour and honesty are concerned"—Sam laughed his unlovely laugh—"and so, I tell you, that if you do not submit to be searched here, quietly, you shall not stir out of this room till you are searched in spite of you."

Mr. Linnock's tone and manner became suddenly firm and commanding. Sam looked at him puzzled, and frowning badly;—then he said—"Very well, Mr. Linnock; now we be a going to understand one another; I tried this here little lark of a trick, just to find out your mind towards me; nothing else, Miss's, or I be blowed; so, there be your purse," he flung it on the ground—"and good night; and good night to *you*, too, Mr. Linnock; not forgetting good Mr. Michael Mutford, in the corner, who advised all this nonsen's, along with you, and sits there to see me blown, as he be a thinking of; good night, gentlemen."

Linnock strode hastily after Sam, and detained him inside the door, whispering him anxiously.—Mrs. Fox had picked up her purse, the moment she heard it jingle on the floor, and now saying that she did believe Sam meant no harm, and that she forgot and forgave, professed her intention to load her cart, with eggs, sundries and self, and ride off as fast as she could to her poor dear Mas'r Fox.

"Do then," laughed the 'prentice, as she passed him; and Mutford thought he laughed as if he knew something.

"That's the very case, Sam;" said Mr. Linnock, after she had withdrawn, continuing aloud the conversation he had begun in whispers—"to take you out of her power; nothing more; to let her see we are honest folk, and to keep us all as clear as possible of what none of us love or like——law, Sam, law;—and if I *did* speak big to you, why it was put on, just to make a show to her face: I feared you might go on with the joke, too long: perhaps a day or so, merely to frighten her; and then, the Foxes are so poor, and such skin-flints, who could say what might happen, and they knowing a little too much—that is in case we vexed them: and so, Sam, see what is inside o' this other purse"—handing him one—"to——"

"To make up for the one I stole but warn't let keep?"—interrupted Sam, grinning, as he put the gift in his pocket.

"No, no—to pay you for your half night's work, and some arrears:—have I not told you I was as sure as yourself you only meant a lark, like?"

"Well, Mr. Linnock, thankee,—and I be sure you did"—and Samuel left the room.

"Upon my veracity, Mr. Mutford, I was

sure of no such thing," resumed Mr. Linnock, turning to his new friend: "contrary-wise, I believe, in my conscience, the 'prentice stole the purse, as sure as he ever swallowed a go of *eau-divvy:* but, you see, Sir, one is now and then obliged to be peaceable, for peace-sake, and to keep one's crust whole; so that for the same reason that I made him give back the little prize to Mrs. Fox, that is—to keep *her* on our hands,—I am forced not to aggravate Sam; he could injure us, Sir, all of us; you and me, and the whole concern; and there 's a heavy lump of reddish flesh between his eyes that I don't half admire: I wish we never had nothing to do with Sam; but that 's useless, now; the only thing to be done is to watch him and humour him; and I think, for the present, he is quiet."

Mutford was not without observing the ready tacking of his name to "the whole of the concern," in the first part of this speech; and with the latter part of it he did not agree.

"Well, Sir," Mr. Linnock continued, drawing a chair close to Mutford's, and resting his hands on his knees, soberly and demurely —"and 'tis time we finished our own little business, now, I think."

"I think so, too, Mr. Linnock," answered the candidate for promotion, quite as demurely.

"We have heard it said that you have sailed before this time of day, Mr. Mutford?"

"You have been rightly instructed, Mr. Linnock: before the death of my elder brother, I was a midshipman for two years."

"Very good, Sir, very good,"—Mr. Linnock bowed respectfully, yet in a way that suggested he was thinking of the honour and character of the Miss Molly, as much as of Mutford's youthful achievements:—"and you are also master of the French tongue, I believe?"

"I have spoken it among the French people, so as always to make myself understood, Sir—" Mutford continued, smiling to himself, contemptuously: and yet he was amused too.

"The honour of your hand, then, Captain—Captain Mutford, of the Miss Molly"—and, still most gravely, the arch Smuggler extended his;—"and 'tis the first time, since I sailed myself, that any one bore that title; my fair-haired brother Bob is mate—no more; and even the Don was but—*but* the Don; in fact, the only name we gave him; to be sure, he had little to do with working the vessel, though

you will have a good deal, and only filled *one* of your appointments—that of interpreter among the knowing ones, at t'other side, who, I protest to you, Sir, often plundered us upon the wilful mistake of a few words of broken lingo;—and so——you accept your commission, Captain?"

"On conditions, master and owner."

"That of course. Captain's pay of the Miss Molly always a sixth of the *bona fide* turn up of each of her runs-in."

"A little indefinite, master mine. What can you value each trip at, one with another?" Mutford looked at certain notes he had made upon a card. Mr. Linnock eyed h m keenly, without his knowledge.

"Well, Sir, well; suppose we say—" and he mentioned a specific sum for each trip.

"And how many trips a month, owner?"

"As many as *you* can make, Sir; I bless Providence, the demand on the concern is able to bear your best, in the way of supply."

"So far, so good, Sir. Condition second: An advance, forthwith, to the amount of the pay of two trips."

"Done, Captain" Mr. Linnock walked to a desk, deliberately unlocked it, and told down

on Mutford's knee a respectable little heap of bank of England notes.

"A bargain, then, Mr. Linnock—I am thy Captain:"—he rolled up the notes, and Linnock did not notice the expression of his face, as Mutford crushed them hard in his hand, and setting his teeth, at the same time, indulged in this short reverie——"'Tis won—'tis *had* ——!— I am bought and sold—ay, and by, and to, the man before me—but, no matter; Bessy—you shall not starve—and you, brother-lieutenant Graves, you shall not call me a swindler, though you may yet be the very man to run me down for a smuggler:—my other creditors must wait."

When Mr. Linnock glanced at his newly-made officer, Mutford was smiling and tapping the floor with his foot.—"Recollecting something I heard you say to Martha Hugget, owner, I presume I soon step aboard?"

"The Miss Molly ought to stand off for t'other coast, before day-break, Captain."

"I am ready, then, and glad of getting to work so soon. Shall we have need to dodge about, at the other side, for any length of time?"

"I should think not, Sir; enough cargo for two trips is ready, at hand, Mas'r mate says."

"Good.—Tell me one other thing, worshipful. Suppose a chase, by one of those holiday cutters—what then?"

"First of all, I should say——"

"Oh, I know that; get off from the guager, if possible; but if he won't let us? and, suppose, says something to bring us to?"—

"The Miss Molly has a few teeth in her jaw, Captain."

"And, with a good chance, if snarled at, ought to snarl again, you think?"

"With a real good chance—perhaps she ought, Sir. Her cargo is always worth keeping."

"And has she ever tried to keep it, in the way we were speaking of?"

Mr. Linnock let his colossal head fall towards his breast, laughed, and spoke of supper, and a tune on the piano, before going down to look after the boats. Mutford could understand a hint, and so he changed the topic.

"The Don, owner—the Don—: you once told me I should know more about him, if you and I stood, as we do stand, to-night."

" I remember," assented Mr. Linnock, " and you 'll find me a man of my word, Captain Mutford, in that, as well as other things. The Don was a relation of your own,"—Mutford started,—" your half-brother, the Honourable Augustus Allan."

" The madman?—and you chose him to do business for you, Mr. Linnock?"

" Madman they call him now, I admit; madman he was not then, however, Captain, and I know a thing or two about him, and perhaps about yourself into the bargain.——"

" D—n him, Sir!"—said Mutford, suddenly and fiercely;—Mr. Linnock, good man, stared —" yes, owner, under your favour, let him be very particularly confounded—he and his—that is, Sir, so far as any thing can concern him and me, in common. And now, as you said yourself, a while ago, supper, a tune on the piano, and Miss Eliza (whom you, Sir, did *not* add,) with all my heart—and stomach; for, indeed, proprietor, I am hungry;—but first—I had forgotten—" (Mutford had *not*—) " oblige me with a sheet or two of paper,—here are pens and ink—and the privilege of being alone a moment,—I mean while I can write a letter."

Mr. Linnock complied with his officer's demands, and quitted the little parlour, requesting Mutford to repair to the supper-room as soon as he could find time to do so, while he, Mr. Linnock, would just step out of the house, to hasten the preparations for getting the Miss Molly under weigh, and return when it should be the hour for summoning her captain on board.

Mutford sat down, took a pen in his hand, and was about to write. Before he did so, however, a leer stole over his face, his eyes fixed on nothing, straight before him, and he ended in giving way to a disagreeable, low laugh. Something like the following were the rational notions that produced these rational effects :—"Ay, indeed: bought and sold; Doctor-Faustus-like;—and, in the name of the fiend! who knows what this black-muzzled old Smuggler—or the semblance of him—may be?—I wish I had looked close at his nether extremities:"—and, not quite discontinuing his laugh, Mutford counted out the sum of money he had borrowed of Lieutenant Graves, and enclosed it to him in a sheet of paper, merely writing the words—"Thanks, and good b'ye."

But when he took up another sheet of paper, which was to cover another enclosure, he grew serious, saddened, tamed. His head rested on his hand, he sighed and groaned. He wrote the following:—

MY DEAREST, DEAREST SISTER.

In a much shorter time than I had expected, after parting from you, I have been fortunate enough to succeed in providing the enclosed,—honestly and independently. I send it immediately to you, to guard against the probability, or even possibility, of the sum I left for you in the hands of your landlady not proving ample for your wants and comforts. Use it freely, for I am rich, and, with attention (strict attention) to my present and future duties, shall be. Those duties do, and will prevent me, however, from seeing you very soon. But I *must* elude them, in a month or two, to make you a visit. Till then, think of me, as of a brother that loves you truly and dearly, and that to the day of his death will cherish and protect you—as well as he can.

Provide yourself, dear Bessy, with every comfort and assistance demanded by your situ-

ation. This I request, beseech, and, if I may or ought, command. And tell me how you are, by a letter addressed to me "Poste Restante, Boulogne-sur-mer — " and I will answer you speedily. Farewell, dearest Bessy.

Your most affectionate Brother,

MICHAEL MUTFORD.

Poor Bessy never received this letter.

When he had written and sealed it, he examined the amount of the bank notes now remaining at his disposal, on his own account, and smiled grimly as he ascertained that it was still enough for a cherished purpose. He then arose, spiritedly, stamped his foot on the floor, as if re-assuring himself of the return and sufficiency of his bodily strength, for any good enterprise, and, the next moment, entered the supper-room, humming the words of the popular song which Miss Eliza just then happened to be playing on—*her* piano.

He supped with the two charming sisters, delighting both, but to Miss Eliza was downright gallant. He laughed—but, now, merrily, or seemingly so—he was witty, smart, assailing, and captivating. She sang all her nicest new

London songs for him: he had none of the kind to respond to her with, at her request, but he gave her scraps of some she had never before heard—though she avowed her admiration of them—rhyming quips, and cranks, and oddities, in fact, of his own brain, never gone on with, and for the most part, never even noted down. For example, first—and Miss Eliza smiled and dimpled under this specimen of his original composition—(he had drunk enough wine to make him own his poetical genius—) though, indeed, they had once been inspired by a very different person—

> Young thing, I thought my day was o'er,
> For loving as I loved before;
> Young thing, I thought my heart was old,
> And all its pulses dead or cold—
> But I had never seen thee, then—
> Oh, ask me not to love again!

The next scrap nearly did away with the effect of this one.—Mutford had written a song when he was a gay and discerning midshipman of fifteen, but could now recollect only a very untrimmed bit of it:—he knew, he said, that one verse began with a line which ended with—no he could not tell what: but certainly, the next line

ended with—either bowers, or hours, and then, it went on—

* * * * *

And why *should* not the garden of women
Be like to the garden of flowers?
Oh, if one be my rose, daffodilly,
Sweet-Willy,
Or lily,
Another I call;
Nay ————

And here Mutford's memory again failed him and he could only aver that the last line of *that* verse ran thus—to rhyme with "I call—"

Why *not* snatch a leaf from them all?

The third specimen, in answer to a fashionable boat-song from Miss Eliza, was, most probably, an extempore—

Right jolly smugglers we!
Of all melancholy
And folly,
From morning to night ever free—
Oh, right jolly smugglers we!

In the old night's noon,
In the glimpse of the moon,
O'er waters that creep,
Glassy and deep,

Or when they run dashing,
Foaming and flashing,
Our sure way we know,
As we go, as we go;—
The happiest fellows,
The honestest fellows,
The jolliest fellows that sail here below!
Oh, right jolly smugglers we!

It was rather difficult to sing some of these lines to any known airs; but Mutford insisted he had adapted them all to airs very well known indeed, though they were old English ones, sterling old English ones, and therefore not much in the mouths of singers of the present day. It is believed, however, in the face of his assertion, that he invented the airs, out of his own musical imagination—(in downright truth, he had neither an ear for music, nor the slightest knowledge of it as a science) and performed them, for the first time, *ad libitum*, on the spot.

Miss Eliza sang something touching, about home, and he recollected eight lines that might serve as an answer—

It is not home, it is not home,
When from the old familiar places
All, all are gone, changed or gone,
The old familiar faces!

Their gentle light, alone made bright
Each trait the sun here vainly plays on—
And since to me, dimm'd they be,
'Tis *not* old home I gaze on!

And these were followed without any provocation, except the flow of his own associations, by other lines that he had almost unconsciously put together in the comparatively sunny days of his first youth, when, after many changes of place and of climate with his father and his sister, he wanted to prove to himself, in verse, how independent of the clouds or the latitude, or the time of the year, human beings are—

We brought the summer with us,
We brought the summer with us!
Flowers might blow or fade,
Skies make sun or shade,
'Twas all the same,
Where'er *we* came,
We brought the summer with us!

The summer was within us!
The summer was within us!
Minds, *our* skies, so bright
In the heart's sun-light—
And fancy's bowers
To give us flowers—
Oh, we brought the summer with us!

Lines like the last he had indulged in, must needs have called up recollections: and recollections were not exactly calculated to enable Mutford to keep up his sparkling powers, on the present occasion. So, he sank, and grew dismal-faced, and stupid, and, Miss Eliza thought, tipsyish and ugly. By the aid of another of her merriest songs, however, another glass of champagne, and a resolute rally, Mutford came round again, in sufficient force to give Mr. Linnock,—when he appeared to summon his Captain on board the Miss Molly—the opportunity of detecting him on his knees to Miss Eliza, and doing not unbidden homage to—her fair hand, perhaps.

And—" Well, as I live," said Miss Eliza to her sister, after he had taken leave, to walk down to the beach with her father—" Mr. Mutford is wonderfully improved, and may turn out to be a pleasing as well as a prosperous man, in a little time"—And she went on, making certain calculations and fancying certain contingencies suggested by almost every man she had seen since she was——what age?—Ten.

" May I never see *her* face again," was Mut-

ford's ungrateful reciprocation of these generous thoughts in his regard, as the sound of the sea came on his ears, and, in the shadow of a tall rock, Mr. Linnock, affectionately and like a father, taking his hand, and bidding "God bless him!"—pointed out the boat which was to bear Mutford to the Miss Molly.

We are in France—though not far advanced into "the bowels of the land;" in Boulogne, in fact. Boulogne, the most cheery-looking, if not the gayest town—of its size—(nay, make no exception)—from itself to Paris: the most cheery-looking, at least of a market day, and in the main street of the *basse-ville*;—(though here come in exceptions which gradually detract from our puff, after all;)—say as little as possible of the *haut-ville*, for there is the debtor's prison, playfully called by the French inhabitants of the town, *L'hotel d'Angleterre.*

We are in Boulogne. Boulogne—the sanctuary—(what the Isle of Man used to be)—of the persecuted of White Albion, and her green "sister-isle"—(as to Caledonia, "meet name for a poetic child," the only *residents* she has contributed to it, are making money in it—) of

the persecuted of White Albion, and her green "sister-isle;" the expatriated of credulous tradespeople and haply of credulous husbands; or the sanctuary of many other born Britains or Hibernians, to whom ere their willing abandonment of country, it was like unto a land of promise—of milk and honey, and fat—of claret, champagne, and cognac—of mansion-like chateaux, with court-yards, and aristocratic-looking gates—and to whom it was all this, if not more, at a third of "the prices," of the English or Dublin butcher, dairy-man, grocer, wine-dealer, landlord, and collector of taxes.—Make liberal exceptions, among the five or six thousand "Anglais" of its motley population, on the score of good and amiable human beings who are in Boulogne either to educate their children, or simply because they like it—and put out of view, altogether, holiday visitors or bathers, or birds of passage—do this, and behold the two great classes of strangers which Boulogne numbers among her residents:—first class—(so called, or as it calls itself—) men and women who, for many reasons, could not well stay at home, and who supply the far greater number—(women as well as men—read it, and ponder over it,

oh ye dames of England!) of lodgers to the *Hotel d'Angleterre*—gloomy and ruthless abode, out of which, without paying the last farthing, there is no redemption!—second class; only men and women who could have stayed at home, without fear of a sheriff's officer, a crim-con, or a duel, but who, purely and laudably, out of an affection for good things, have come hither to "live better," and seem of more consideration, upon a given sum, than they could do upon double its amount in brick-covered, high-taxed, wealth-wallowing, and yet — with a few unnameable exceptions — pinched and meagre England.—Second class, we say—because, as has before been intimated, others will have it so; ay, and make it be felt so, too, by a very perfect system of colonial exclusiveness, imitated from the great mother country—to the upholding of which, at the fiat—nay, the fiat of titles, Sir, male and female—(a little worse for the wear, perhaps—"but what of that?") clubs, and subscription lists for "the establishment," (or, partially, little Willis's, as it tacitly aspires to be) mainly tend; and indeed it is quite edifying, in the not unwatchful eyes of the French Boulonnais, to mark the squabbles thereby created between

the two classes; the purchasing of whips and cudgels, for the personal improvement of one another—whips and cudgels seldom used, however; — the placardings; the paper-wars; the self-sufficient hubbub—just as if they were all in a little town, at home, comfortable by themselves, and had not twelve or fourteen thousand people, besides, to bother, or put out of their way, or make laugh.

But do our dear countrymen and country-women of Boulogne — and perhaps of other places in France—never think of conforming themselves to the *genius* of the people among whom they have fixed their residence? Indeed they do; that is, according to their own notions. For instance. As manners and morals are said to be not so prim in France as in England or Ireland, young men of "the first class" will curse, and swear, now and then, and blaspheme, and drink hard; young women of the same class, will sit down in the corner of a public ball-room, silent, fretty, and sulky, if the wife of some husband on whose arm they *have* been hanging, the whole evening before—(the whole week before) come in, and is guilty of the bad taste of taking his other arm. Old women,

of the same class, will see their daughters do this, and perhaps something else, and think well of it. Middle-aged men, of the same class, will exchange wives,—and the wives will assent to the little arrangement, and every thing go on well. And these things happen with a *nonchalante*, at-home, matter-of-course air, to which we are only approaching pretty closely in England; it is the result of a feeling of being in France. "The French do not mind."—Perhaps not.—It may be added, however, that the cant of French carelessness in morals, once so pat in England, and taken up by silly and inexperienced, as well as innately vicious English people,—(few, we know they are—fewer may they be!)—taken up, conveniently, on trust, has greatly helped to sink—even below the level of a just estimation of facts—our own character for behaving ourselves, in the eyes of our neighbours.

End the sermon, for it grows like one. We are in Boulogne: or rather outside Boulogne; by the sea; on the sands. It has been a clear, sunny winter's day; the first shades of the premature evening just begin to steal on.—Shots resound in our ears. We look about us,

and discover a party of pigeon-shooters, just as regularly equipped, as if you had met them on Primrose-hill, or on the east-cliff, at Hastings. Approach them.

The chief of the group is a man of forty, or thereabout. He is habited as a sportsman, and nothing in his face or air would make you give the odds that he may not be a groom. At his left-hand is a youth of twenty, looking more somebody, and of a slow, dry, superciliously-stupid *tournure*, incorrigibly, though only recently English. At his right-hand stands another individual—perhaps still younger—about eighteen—of moderate stature, taking sex into consideration, and wearing a game-bag and a powder-flask over her smartly expressed bust and short petticoats. She carries a light fowling-piece, ordered expressly for her, by the gentleman of forty; it is raised to her hip; is cocked; her finger is on its trigger, ready to let it off; and with one foot advanced before the other, in the vigorous attitude of a keen sportsman, she is intently watching the renewed attempt to fly upward, of a pigeon secured by a string, to a stake. Her male supporters also carry fowling-pieces, of the usual size,—other unarmed friends are behind.

"Hang him—how tiresome!—he will *not* try it again, I believe," said the young lady.

"And yet I'm sure you didn't wing him a grain more than we said you would, Fan," observed her friend to the right.

"I don't know that," she answered pettishly, —"I by no means shoot well to-day—not at all nicely—delicately; but two out of three, for dead shots, and killed my bird, instead of only winging, or laming him, twice."

"Oh, come, Fan; 'twas very well: no human being is equally fortunate or skilful, every day."

"You don't do yourself justice, indeed you don't," lisped the youth at her other side; "you have shot amazingly well."

"And ever does," added a gentleman behind.

"And is an honour to her master," said another.

"Yes, yes, I'm not ashamed of my little pupil," rejoined the white-hatted chief of the sport, patting her shoulder, playfully.

"Are you not?"—she asked, in a soft undertone, and contriving to repay him with as grateful a glance as could be sent forth, sideways, from beneath the scanty protection of the peak of her male *caske*:—"then, in that case, do

rout up that lazy pigeon for me—do throw one little stone at him."

"Here, then—ready!"—He stooped for the stone.

"Here, here—I *am* ready, deuce knows—" and the stone was flung, and the broken-winged pigeon fluttered a few feet from the ground, and the gentle maiden fired—and great was the applause to see him come to the ground again, evidently not killed, but only lamed in the other wing, as it had been wagered would be the case.

"Lord Acorn," said one of the spectators, "here comes your wife—" The fair amazon's tutor turned round, ejaculating pure English, indeed, but English sometimes interdicted—"Ay, Fan—" he continued—"and your mamma with her."

"Indeed?"—drawled forth Fan—"but I wonder her ladyship ventures out, towards evening, with *her symptoms.*"

"And so will the many in Boulogne, whom she has entertained with them," assented Lord Acorn.

"My wife heard them, at length, no later than this morning, a full hour, at Scamp's

corner," observed a rubicund-faced person of the party.

"Oh, doubtless," resumed Lord Acorn—"but I grieve to inform all whom it may concern, that, before *I* left home to-day, the doctor decided that Lady Acorn and himself had all along been mistaking."

"What! nothing, after all, in 'Lady Acorn's symptoms?'" sneered the pretty amazon; and she was echoed, in great good-humour, by others of the group.

The subject of these remarks was yet at a distance. Now she drew near enough, with the mamma of Lord Acorn's pupil, to become exposed to personal criticism; and presently words of admiration escaped all; while Lord Acorn whispered to the young lady—"She keeps her word, as I am a Christian man!—Relieved of 'her symptoms' this morning, and no longer in danger of injuring, by over-exertion, the long-promised heir of the house of Acorn, her ladyship *has* mounted flask, bag, and piece, and issues forth to rival you in good earnest, Fan!"

Lady Acorn's low, round little figure certainly appeared caparisoned, as his lordship

intimated. Servants followed her and her friend.

"Lady Acorn, Lady Acorn, my love, *do* you mean to destroy yourself?"—asked her husband, when she was within hearing—"put by the piece, for heaven's sake, if 'tis loaded!"

"I have been saying much the same thing to her ladyship," observed the mother of the more experienced amazon—"and that it requires constant practice, and great caution, under such an instructor as your lordship, before a lady can be safely trusted with a fowling-piece, at her own discretion."

"I am much obliged to you, dear Mrs. Howit," said Lady Acorn—and she continued with an expression of something like silliness—"but I am positively determined to shoot as well as Miss Howit, whether my dear Acorn will take me in hand or not;—and I will go on cautiously, you may be sure; beginning with a flash in the pan, and then adding a little powder, only, in the barrel, and then a little more, with a little paper, and no shot yet:—just as far as I have got to-day—and see!"—she presented her piece awkwardly, discharged it,

wheeling round with a nervousness not yet broke in, and the flash of the powder almost singed her husband's whisker, and the paper wadding struck Mrs. Howit in the forehead, who, forgetting Lady Acorn's declaration, of paper, and paper only, shrieked, and said she was shot.

This little accident explained away, and soothed over, Lady Acorn asked her lord to accompany her home, with a view to prepare for dinner. He and Mrs. Howit, and Miss Fanny Howit, said, in a breath, that he was otherwise engaged.

"Oh, very well," assented her ladyship—"I only hoped you might spare him for *one evening*, dear Mrs. Howit; and, indeed," continuing in a low, confidential tone of voice, to her friend, "I do think, for your own and dear Fanny's sake—at least on account of what people are saying—though I am sure they only take liberties with us all—but I do think you ought not to encourage Acorn, every evening; besides, I think you allow him a little too much champagne, and that, and falling asleep on the sofa, may injure his health, you know."

"My dear Lady Acorn," answered Mrs. Howit,

solemnly—" can you or any one expect me to seem ungrateful for the attentions paid to my family by a British nobleman?"

" Certainly not; come; let 's go home," she withdrew, with her servant.

" Come, pupil," said Lord Acorn, giving his arm to Miss Fanny Howit;—" and you know I am to bring with us our young arrival from Paris—But where is he?"—his lordship alluded to the youth we have mentioned as holding place at Miss Fanny's left-hand, and who now was not to be seen.

" He parted from us, just as Lady Acorn came up," said the young lady—" and I watched why. A man in a cloak and hairy cap had come near us, and eyed him, once or twice, in a remarkable manner; and he did not seem to like that, and when the man walked a little farther off, he hurried towards the town, in another direction.

" Ay, I hope he is not to be provided, for the night, with a bed in the hotel in the high-town; I suspect he has left Paris in some trouble, poor fellow; if he doesn't join us at dinner, or this evening, we must see and make

him out, one of the first things, after breakfast, to-morrow; but home now, Fan, it gets chilly."

"Chilly as whose heart?"—coquetted the pigeon-winger, in a tone as soft as an infant's lispings, while the whole sporting-party left the scene of their day's exploits.

Lieutenant Graves received Mutford's enclosure, by an unknown hand, very early on the morning after it was written. By a friend, just starting from the village, he dispatched to his brother Richard, in London, an account of the circumstance. To this account, allusion has already been made. Richard Graves received it on the evening of the same day. It distressed him anew, almost as much as he had before been distressed on Mutford's account. From it there arose the strong presumption, if not the certainty, that Mutford continued a system of gross deception towards his friend. He could not, as he had promised he would do, have returned to the sea-side village, and re-appeared in it, without having been recognised, and without the fact having come to the knowledge of Alexander Graves, whose anxiety would prompt him to make continued and minute inquiries on

the subject. Mutford had, then, once more broken faith, delivering himself up to some desperate career—at least to some vain and wild one. Neither was his unfortunate sister Bessy in the village—and here appeared additional equivocation. And her lot—her's as well as his—what was it?—was he with her?—if not, whither had he sent her?—with whom? under what protection?—Graves shuddered at a new—a terrible fear. "The wild beast is up in his heart—and God only knows what he may be capable of doing!—doing—towards her!—and this money, too, which he has sent to Alexander—how can he have procured *that*?—Infatuated—possessed—wayward, as well as most unfortunate Mutford!—why has he not placed some reliance on my parting words?—Perhaps I did not impress them with sufficient force. I will go down to the village, this very night. Other business, though still connected with him, must have sent me thither to-morrow morning. Now, not an hour must be lost. If he be not there, perhaps some of the persons whose names he has mentioned to me in his letters, or his journal—perhaps Lord Lintern himself may give me a clue after him."

Graves was about to hasten himself to leave town in two hours, by the night-coach. A knock sounded at his outside door. He passed into an inner-room to tell little Joey not to admit any person. Little Joey had already answered the knock, and Graves heard a gentleman say—"The Reverend Mr. Snow to wait on Mr. Graves."

Associating the names, and in some degree, the concerns of Mutford and Mr. Snow together, Graves changed his intention of denying himself, and went out to receive his visitor.—"Your pen is not quite as bad a portrait-painter as you said it was, Mutford," thought Graves, as he seated Mr. Snow in his audience-chamber; "I believe I could have guessed at its original without having him named to me."

"I wait on you, Mr. Graves, as the friend of Lady Ellen, and the Honourable Augustus Allan," Mr. Snow began.

"I could have supposed so, Sir," answered Graves.

"Indeed! and have either of my young friends forewarned you of my call, by letter?"

"No, Mr. Snow."

"One of them, then, who has consulted you,

some months ago, may have mentioned my name to you, at that time?"

"Not that I recollect, Mr. Snow; but a friend of mine did so, before that time; and an admiring friend of yours, also, Sir—Mr. Michael Mutford."

"Mr. Michael Mutford! you know him, then, and intimately, Mr. Graves?"

"I know him, since he was about sixteen, and I two-and-twenty, and as intimately as one bosom friend can know another."

"Well, this *is* fortunate; we shall do our business zealously, together, on account of it, Mr. Graves."

"I warrant you, Mr. Snow."

"To begin, then. Between four and five months since, the Honourable Augustus Allan consulted you, I believe."

"He did, Sir. He came to me and informed me that a witness upon the last trial—the trial at Bar, between his father, Lord Lintern, and the Mutfords—had made to him certain dying declarations."

"Of which I am aware," said Mr. Snow.

"And which, if legally established, would much tend to the happiness of the very Michael

Mutford of whom we have spoken, Mr. Snow."

"And that I know, too, Sir.—Pray, before we go a step farther, let me ask if you ever acquainted your friend with the visit of his half-cousin to you, and of its nature?"

"Never, Sir—for two reasons. First, his half-cousin pledged me to profound professional secrecy, until such time as he could receive advices from his sister, Lady Ellen, then living with her father, of the result of an attempt to induce Lord Lintern—and with your aid, I believe, Sir—" (Mr. Snow smiled and nodded) —"to admit and act upon the declaration of the dying witness, without the law's interference. —That reason, Sir, kept me silent, for the moment.—My lips have since been sealed—at least since my last parting from Mutford—by other facts. The Honourable Augustus Allan led me to expect, day after day, for many days, that he should have a letter from his sister.—None arrived—or, at least, he told me so. Suddenly he disappeared from town. He had promised to visit me anew, on a certain day. Weeks after that day passed, and I did not see him. I called at the address which he had

given me, in strict confidence. The people of the house informed me he had been seized, under the certificate of a lunatic doctor, and conveyed to the country, having escaped thence, from confinement, as a lunatic. My credit in his story of the declaration, entirely gave way. A short time after, Mutford himself wrote me word that Lord Lintern's elder son was a madman, and had arrived at his father's house, and been re-committed to close restraint. I gave up the case on which he had consulted me, altogether. It was but natural and reasonable I should do so. And now, I would not mention it to my poor friend, Mutford, because, without doing him the least good, it must only have added to his already excessive irritation upon the subject with which it was so closely connected."

"You acted wisely, Mr. Graves, under the circumstances. But I owe you a little explanation, on this part of our case. Your young client had good reason to expect a letter from his sister, Lady Ellen. She had promised to write to him, and would, if she could, have done so. But, immediately after the failure of our attempt to conciliate Lord Lintern, her father put it out of her power to keep her engagement. I

had scarce left the house when he took away her writing materials, and dismissed her confidential companion; then he watched her closely, till the next morning; and then he conveyed her, himself, to Wales, where, till a few days ago, she has lived in the closest restraint, under the roof of his sister.—I hold in my hand her letter, enabling me to give you this explanation, which I received only the morning before the last, after she had at length escaped, under fit and competent protection, from her aunt's house. And it is the same letter, Mr. Graves, which occasions my visit to you.

"In great anxiety about her poor brother, Augustus, and fearful, on account of her not having written to him before her journey into Wales, that the misfortune which *has*, must *have* befallen him,—my good young friend takes the earliest opportunity of giving me your name and address—communicated to her by your client, after his first consulting you,—in order to enable us both—you and me, Mr. Graves,—to see what can be done, with right, truth, and mercy on our side, to make his lot happier, and, at the same time, amend the fortunes of your own suffering friend, Mr. Michael Mutford."

"Well, Mr. Snow, we shall see.—It is true that my former client has been confined under the certificate of a lunatic doctor?"

Mr. Snow assented.

"Before he applied to me?"

"Months before, Mr. Graves."

"And ever since?"

Mr. Snow sighed deeply as he repeated—"Ever since."

"And is fairly the object of such wretched treatment at present?"

"Mr. Graves, we believe he has never been fairly its object."

"Indeed, Sir!—But the certificate?"

"And have not you, in your hands, Sir, the certificates of three other practitioners, of much greater celebrity than the gentleman who signed his sad sentence, asserting its fallacy?"

"No, Mr. Snow—nor have I heard of such documents."

"Indeed! he wrote word to his sister, after, I believe, his last interview with you, that he had procured them, and forwarded them to you by a messenger on whom he could rely—(he wished to avoid the humiliation of a first avowal to you of the miserable charge brought against him)."

"Then, Mr. Snow, let us have, without delay, the name and address of that trusty messenger."

"The honourable George Allan, Sir: his brother."

"Ay, indeed?"—Graves looked struck and thoughtful. "Mr. Snow, our experience of the details which now and then come out in the practice of our profession, does not fully warrant us in believing that, for the bearer of such documents, under such circumstances, a brother is always to be chosen."

"Your meaning shocks me, Mr. Graves—and yet, the events seem to justify your suspicions. We have then to go to work, anew. He must again be seen by men of professional rank, and high moral character. It is indispensable. Indispensable, for his own sake, and for young Mutford's, and for his poor sister's sake—all are bound up in the same case. If the witness made the declaration attributed to him by Augustus Allan, the Mutfords are righted. If Augustus Allan be not proved sane, we cannot admit his testimony of that declaration."

"True, Mr. Snow.—But, for our purposes of seeing the Mutfords righted, I am happy to inform you we do not now want to establish

whether or not that declaration has ever been made."

"Indeed, Mr. Graves?"

"We cannot fail, indeed, to show the strong probability of its having been made, while we set up the case it would have gone to supply, with evidence of a much stronger nature."

"Explain, Mr. Graves, pray explain:—and, showing the strong probability that it *has* been made, we show, at the same time, that,—at least by his assertion of having heard it,—Augustus Allan is no lunatic?"

"Even so, Mr. Snow. Still the two cases go on, hand and hand. And now, Sir, I explain. A few days ago, a lawyer, who—since the trial at bar between the Mutfords and Lord Lintern, mark you—has found me out, and given me briefs, called upon me, for the purpose of considering a letter he had just received. He was Lord Lintern's solicitor, and the letter was from his Lordship. I have a copy of it; and you had best read it."

Graves handed it to his visitor. The reader will recollect the original.

"It surprises you, Sir?—it did surprise me, from all I had previously heard of Lord Lintern's remarkable character."

"Surprise me, Mr. Graves! indeed it does. Why, this proves the good seed growing up, while some of us slept, and would not believe it.—Well, Mr. Graves?"

"Well, Sir, upon these instructions, the solicitor and I went to work. We called to our aid two of the most celebrated chemists. We all examined and experimented upon that entry, in a body. We all decided that it was a forgery."

"Good news, good news, indeed. Has Lord Lintern's solicitor yet advised him of the decision?"

"By this night's post he writes to do so. His Lordship will have the letter to-morrow morning. But there is more than the decision to establish the forgery, Mr. Snow. One of the perpetrators of it has been discovered — is in our power; has admitted his crime."

"Does he mention his instigators?"

"Yes. Certain members of Lord Lintern's family."

"And Lord Lintern—"

"Is free of all suspicion of connivance."

"Have you seen your friend, poor Mutford, since this happy discovery?"

"Since the actual discovery, I have not, Sir;

but I did see him after the receipt of the letter from Lord Lintern, and at parting from him, gave my friend a hint that, in a few days, I might have good tidings to send him. Had he not been the over-sensitive, the pendulating, as well as the much-wronged and sore-hearted man he was and is, my hint might have assumed the shape of a piece of formal information. But, as the very first steps of our investigation had not, at that moment, been firmly taken, and, in consequence, as I could not calculate on a positive result in his favour—though, indeed, my hopes were strong, and on reasonable grounds, too—I feared, as on a former occasion, to agitate him, perhaps unnecessarily."

"And again, Sir, I approve your caution, though it has doomed your poor friend to some additional days of misery. You have written to him, doubtless, this evening?"

Mr. Snow's last question produced an answer from Graves which greatly distressed that gentleman. It went into a statement of Graves's ignorance of where Mutford now really was; of Alexander Graves's letter, asserting that neither he nor his sister were in the sea-coast village; of Mutford's promise to go thither and protect

his sister, who, he averred, awaited him there, —and, pressed by Mr. Snow, Graves could not eventually conceal the late plot against his own life, laid by his unfortunate friend.

Mr. Snow was moved even to trembling. The two gentlemen, equally anxious for almost every person concerned, consulted together, as to the best steps to be instantly taken. They finally resolved to travel that night towards Lord Lintern's residence, with a view of presenting themselves, at an early hour, before his Lordship; and, shortly afterwards, they were on the road, seated side by side in Mr. Snow's carriage.

THE as-yet-unnamed, the never-to-be-named, and the to-be-no-farther-guessed-at consoler of Mas'r Fox during the absence of his wife, in France, had engaged, upon the day, in the evening of which we have last seen her, to meet Samuel Geeson, at or about the hour of six o'clock, in order to confer with him on important business.

Previous to the appointed hour, something happened to make her change her mind. Yet, as she wished to keep friends with Sam, she set about warning him of her necessary breach of faith, intending to add something which might soothe him in his disappointment.

She went to his mother's wretched abode. He was not at home, nor would the querulous dame give her much satisfactory information as to where he might be found: on the contrary, rising from her crazy chair, by an ill-fed fire—

(chiefly composed of small chips and shavings, gained by begging them of the carpenters to whose craft her son was nominally attached)—she raised her voice in anger against her visitor; rated her for her "foreright boldness" in coming to make such a request, to the house of a mother; advanced on her, swelling her tones and her sentences, at every step, and, at length, fairly pushed the intruder over her threshold, and shut the chinky door in her comely face.

The repulsed, little daunted, and wearing an air of tranquillity, which frequent experience of such trials alone could give, paused a moment to think, and then bent her hasty and business-like steps, in another direction.

Samuel Geeson was a member of a club, or society, of which branches, or repetitions may, we believe, be found in many towns and villages of England: one of repute and consideration: "the ringers," in fact. This, his questor knew; and further recollecting that the present evening was distinguished as that of its weekly meeting, when members assembled to practise, with little hand bells, the important fine art which it sought to cultivate, she arrived in a short time at the house made sacred to its sittings.

Stepping inside the open door of the humble inn, she peered cautiously, to one side. Neither the observant hostess, nor yet any one of her exemplary and numerous daughters, was in the bar; Sam Geeson's friend pushed onward, exploringly, therefore, unconscious of fear. The room occupied by the ringers soon denoted itself to her ear, by the regulated harmonious chime of little bells which came from it. She opened the door cautiously, and stood on the threshold, unnoticed, so vivid was the tinkling noise, and so abstracted the minds and eyes of the performers.

It was no scene of admiration, or even of novelty, to the spectator: but to a person of another country, or even to an individual of this, whose social place and unadventurous spirit of curiosity have never afforded the opportunity for regarding it, it might have been. Some twenty men, old and young, from grey-headed age, down to beardless youth, were sitting, on forms, round a square table, each holding a bell in his hand, and making its tongue strike one blow, as it came to his turn so to do: and thus, blow after blow went round from bell to bell; and round, and round again,

in—(to the performers' minds)—untiring monotony.—The chins of all rested on their breasts; the eyes of all were fixed on the table; the lips of all were firmly and eagerly closed—not a word escaped them; the brows of all were bent in the expression of solemn, important, and difficult business. And thus—excepting some moments of application to the porter-pots, or the gin, in the middle of the table—thus they had been occupied for two hours, before; and thus, according to the rules of their institution, they were to be engaged for two hours to come.

The observer at the open-door knew that she must not "give no interruption," till the peal with which she found them busy, should have been repeated a given number of times. As all things must come to an end, however, so did it, and Sam Geeson, who sat nearly opposite to her, was in the act of stretching forth his hand to a pot of porter,—his well-earned comforter, after a long, and, on his part, brilliant "ring—" when their eyes met, and, at a signal, she turned her back on the threatened recommencement of the music, which—some writer says—is the music of Heaven—and, to her great self-congratulation, again accomplished the street

without the cognizance of the rigidly-proper, if not ostentatiously proper, landlady of "The Ringers."

Her friend soon joined her. "It be too soon, old girl," he said.

She knew that as well as he; but, to save him a walk for nothing, she thought she would just come and tell him that mother wanted her within doors for that night—"but stop now, Sam Geeson, will you—to-morrow even—at the same hour and place, without fail."

Sam, in no exceedingly courteous language, remonstrated, and said "he was put upon," and insinuated, that some other individual had prevailed upon her to "go for a walk;" and, in fact, they parted bad friends.

"Let 's see, now," said Sam, when he had been left alone, and—not wanting the power of remarking, in his own mind, the persons and things that came every day under his notice—he followed, cautiously, his false friend, and housed her, indeed, under the very roof of which he had been thinking.

Vengeance, a pleasant vengeance began to work in his breast. He proposed to himself, with one of his unamiable chuckles, to call

upon some neighbours, in whose estimation, as a "serious" man, Mas'r Fox wished to stand very well, lead them to the door, and introduce them when it should be opened.

But his design had scarcely been formed when he was diverted from it. A man came towards Fox's house at a quick pace. Sam stepped back out of sight. The man paused at the door, and he recognized Michael Mutford. None of the 'prentice's passions were very ungovernable. Vengeance—at least in such a case as the present—suggested no sweets to him, if, in the wreaking of it, he lost an opportunity for acquiring—a shilling. And, in consequence of the workings of this admirable constitution and temperament, he now only waited to see Mutford enter the little abode of the little jack-of-all-trades, when he bent his steps to Lord Lintern's. His unfaithful "goer for a walk" escaped his mind altogether; or, did he allow her to trouble him for an instant, she was referred to future measures;—if, indeed, upon his return to her present resting-place in an hour, she could not be found at hand.

Making little doubt that Mutford would stay where he was, for a necessary time, Sam's hope

was that Lord Lintern might find him there, and, in consideration of being saved, by the watchful zeal of his agent, from a night journey to Mr. Linnock's, act more liberally than usual, —" a thing to be wondered at, if he does—the miser !—" added Sam.

He was right in concluding that his lordship would be glad to meet Mutford, at no greater distance than the village from his own house. He also found his fee " pretty fairish." Lord Lintern and he walked side by side, from the nobleman's house. Passing the church-yard of the village, before they could arrive at Fox's, both saw Mutford hastily enter it by the turn-stile gate. Sam's partner, after a pause, there dismissed him. The 'prentice began to run to Mas'r Fox's. One hailed him, and, in the conjuring name of the Miss Molly, who found herself in unexpected need of help, directly turned his steps towards the cliff-path. Again Sam's prudence could control his revenge.

Lord Lintern—though, as an unromantic and sneering man, he would, in ordinary circumstances, have declined such a meeting—determined upon following Mutford into the church-yard. " A sentimental cemetery, and the

occasion of his coming to it, will probably fit *such a boy's nature as his is*, to my purpose," was his Lordship's philosophy.

Upon the failure of his plan, he asked himself would he follow Mutford to the farm-house? and he concluded that, after what he had now seen of the unmanageableness of his nephew, such a step must prove useless, while it would provoke unnecessary exposure of his own family affairs, in the eyes of strangers. He therefore returned home: and again, it is superfluous to indicate the state of his mind.

Hours afterwards, he was ascending to his chamber for the night. A single knock sounded at the hall-door. He questioned the person abroad; after some words, his attendant opened the door, a strange and uncouth-looking man handed a letter and disappeared. He must have scaled the avenue-gate, or the park-walls to get up to the house to deliver it.

Lord Lintern returned into his library to read it. The following were its words.

"Upon the eve—at the instant of removing myself to a distance which must for ever prevent our meeting, or hearing from or of each other,

I write you an answer to a question you proposed to me this evening. It *is* only this instant that it has recurred to my mind. My hatred and my horror of you annihilated it in my mind at the time, and on the spot which some devil of refined cruelty and persecution suggested to you to choose for asking it——but passion rises again within me, and I must control myself.

"Your daughter—yet, first let me tell you, I have been sorely tempted to withhold my answer. It did appear to me a sweet, though a slight retaliation to allow you to think, and *to feel*—as your question imported you had done—that she was in *my* power. The mistake, working on your idea of my character—moulded from your own—would be some torment to you, as long as it should continue. But no. Even yet—even yet, you have not quite, quite brutified me. If not for your sake, for my own—yes, and for her's—though she *is* your daughter—*your's*—I reply, in the simple truth—I know nothing of the present situation of the Lady Ellen Allan. Whatever it may be, I have had no hand in producing it. For many months I have not seen her, nor heard of her.

You may not credit these words—indeed I am almost sure you will not—*cannot*—necessarily, from your nature, *cannot*—yet they *are* the simple truth. And I add, as truly, that if any thing unhappy has overtaken her I shall regret it; for she is very, very unlike her father. But be not alarmed; my regret would chiefly, if not solely, arise from the fact that she once, I believe, pitied my lot, and that I acted ungenerously, furiously—(you were in my mind,)—towards her, in return.

Farewell—hater and destroyer of me and mine.

"MICHAEL MUTFORD."

This letter, Michael had written on board the Miss Molly, while she was almost under weigh. His attention had not, indeed, turned towards the subject of it, till he felt himself about to bid good b'ye to the shores of England, perhaps for ever. It will be recollected that from the moment he left the churchyard, till he embarked, he had been really whirled about by a succession of squally emotions; nor do we here except even his last hour on land with the Misses Linnock. It had engrossed him as much as any other, of that evening, or night.

Lord Lintern, notwithstanding the bitter anticipations of its writer, did believe the assertions of the letter. Nor was it by any reasoning he arrived at his conviction; he believed at once: in spite of him. Every word convinced. Even the raving hostility, the overwhelming insult, mixed up with every word, strengthened his involuntary certainty: and had it another effect? did it add to his aversion and impatience of Michael Mutford?—no—it had a contrary effect: strange to say so—but it had. He retired for the night, in a more appeased state of mind than we have yet seen him admit to himself. His daughter Ellen—his last stay for home—was not lost to him. She had not eloped with Mutford. That was all he would consider with reference to her safety. Wherever she had gone, she *was* safe; competently protected. He felt assured she was. As to her aunt's letter, it now took its place with all its predecessors—at least, in his estimation. It did not continue to be wisdom's own text. Rather—and he yawned over its recollection, as he always did over that of its author—it was lumber, rubbish. And no doubt the silly old woman, by stretching his instructions too far, or by unwisely enforcing them to the letter, upon all

possible occasions, fit and unfit, *had* given some cause for the disappearance of her ill-used prisoner.

He would seek another interview with Mr. Snow,—(and Mr. Snow also, now fully returned to his confidence, and by degrees, to his admiration)—and soon have Lady Ellen at home, again.

And so—the only son of the *dead* Robert Mutford had done him no new injury.—Where had he gone? upon what desperate enterprise? Lord Lintern wished he had remained approachable till — the arrival of the solicitor's letter from London. After all, *had* he, indeed, been wronged?—and received no manifestation of good or fair intentions towards him, since the coming of his father's posthumous letter—of which he must have known — into Lord Lintern's hand? No wonder then, that at the instant of the eternal separation of which the boy had spoken, he should have raved against one who he was sure was —— unjust, as well as—upon just grounds—severe. And, for Lord Lintern, these were large admissions.

And the expected communication from his lawyer—that, that, came into his mind every

moment; and now, Lady Ellen followed its arrival; and now, Mutford — ay, and his, *his* sister — and now—Augustus. A second time Lord Lintern drew partially aside the curtains of his chamber-window, and looked towards the prison of his eldest son—No light now streamed through its grated window. 'Twas long past midnight, and its solitary had gone to rest. "To rest?" questioned Lord Lintern—"will it be as sound as mine?"—One quick, quick thought fled on to another; and before he lay down, that night, Lord Lintern once more returned to his library; re-ascended to his sleeping chamber with a little document before spoken of; read it many times; and, the last time, read it on his knees, from his heart, and for himself: repeating, in its words, a former wish to be made able to believe.

He had given orders, before retiring to rest, that a messenger should demand his letters, in the village, at the earliest hour possible, next morning. Long before that hour, he arose, and, not at rest in the house, went out to walk. In the neighbourhood of his grounds, he encountered his son Augustus, attended by his keepers. The place of meeting was a lonely

green lane, very narrow, highly enclosed by bank, hedge and trees, at either hand, and often winding. At one of its windings, the father and the son suddenly came in view of each other, at but a few yards' distance.

Both started, drew back, and stood still. The habitual hard frown of dislike and despotism knitted Lord Lintern's brow, and his thin tall figure erected and crested itself into the almost theatrical expression of hauteur for which he was remarkable. And he looked to his son for the show of fitful defiance and impatience which, in all their rencounters during the last year, had used to answer to his own assumption of severity. He saw it not, however. After stepping back, and reddening, and allowing his almost supernaturally bright black eyes to send forth one or two flashes, Augustus Allan stood quiet, only that he trembled a little, and growing deeply pale, dropped his eyes on the ground.

Had they met in an open field, or upon a wide road, it is probable they would have passed one another without interchanging a glance, or hesitating, or stopping, or in any way evincing much consciousness. Now it

seemed, in the first instance, that each stood still, as if to yield free way to the other, the lane not being broad enough to permit three persons to pass in one direction, and a fourth in a contrary one, without almost personal contact; for Augustus and his keepers always walked on abreast. This became evident by the actions of the father and the son, immediately afterwards. Both turned their backs to the same side of the lane, and their pause grew continuous. A second glance at Augustus caused Lord Lintern to end it. He saw before him a calmed, self-controlled, inoffensive, if not humbled and contrite man. His own brow smoothened, his air changed, and he walked forward, quietly. The keepers took off their hats to him. He returned their salute. While doing so, he felt something like consternation in perceiving that Augustus also uncovered his head, and stood tranquilly as he passed, his eyes still fixed on the ground. The old man stopped again, and looked in amazement, if in no other feeling, upon him.

"Between *us*, Augustus," he said, unconsciously, "this ought not to be: 'tis as bad as—as almost any thing that has gone before it:—

no, Augustus, thus it were better"—he took his son's hat gently from his hand, placed it on his head, and adding,—"I am glad to see you better"—extended his own hand.

"I thank you, my Lord—I *am* better," he was answered, as Augustus gravely accepted the greeting—"and well enough to be permitted to write to you, now, at least;—may I do so, to-day, without fear of having my letter returned? Or shall I find the surgeon, or my attendants, willing to convey it to you?"

"I will answer your question in the course of the day, Augustus," said Lord Lintern—"you may be assured I will; for the present, I can only repeat I am glad you are so much better: good morning."

His son bowed again, and proceeded homeward with his keepers. Lord Lintern called one of them back.

"What is this?" he inquired of the man, "really a change for the better, or only a change from furious into melancholy?"

The keeper was of opinion that it was really a change for the better: and it had been going on for some time, he added.

"And why have I not been so informed?"

It was the surgeon's business to have spoken, the keeper replied; and he took occasion to say, that if such had not been the case, he wondered much, for his own part.

"Let the surgeon call upon me to-day,"—and Lord Lintern also bent his way towards home.

The servant had come back with letters. He hastily opened one from his solicitor.—He laid it down before him on the table, shaking.

For a long while, his mind attended to nothing else. Breakfast remained untouched, at his hand. At length his eye fixed on another letter, so large, it might be called a packet. The direction to him was in a woman's —indeed, in a girl's hand, and a young girl's too. He opened it. Under the outside envelope was another, unsealed, directed to Michael Mutford; and between both a letter for himself. This he read eagerly, after glancing at the signature, and ascertaining it to be that of—"Bessy—Allan."

"MY LORD,

IT will seem strange to you, that the communication which I made to your Lordship, the last miserable day we met, face to face, had

never before been made to my own father, or to my own brother. It will seem as strange, that, since my dear, dear father's death, I have still kept it secret from—it now appears—my only living protector, Michael Mutford, although, after leaving your neighbourhood, I had the opportunity of doing so. But, if your Lordship does me the favour, nay, the justice to read the accompanying packet, you may find the reasons for my secrecy, hitherto, as well as those which, in my heart and conscience, and after kneeling down, often and often to ask the question, I believe now leave me free to place full confidence in my poor brother.

"The packet, as you will observe, is addressed to him. I leave it open, however, to enable you, also, to satisfy yourself, at length, of things which concern you, my Lord, as well as him and me, very closely. Nor is it to insinuate myself into your pity or compassion, nor to call upon your sense of honour, in my regard, that I do this. You have spurned and wronged me once, Lord Lintern, openly, publicly, shamefully, and that once is enough for me. It is killing me, day by day, since:—it, and the cruel, cruel conduct of others—and, in a little time will have finished

its work. So, I want no reparation from you, or from any one else, even if I would accept it. I only want to prove to my unfortunate brother that I am not as guilty as he thinks me, and to you, my Lord, that I have never,—meanly, wickedly, odiously, plotted against your happiness, or station in the world. Whether or not others have plotted against me, you will be able to judge—against me, poor me,—a girl scarce more than sixteen, the only daughter of an unfortunate—(and how unfortunate?) gentleman,—and now his orphan daughter;—and the sister of his only son—the last son of his name—the heir of his miseries, and of nothing else—and gone from me,—I know not whither.

"Oh, Lord Lintern, little as you expect it, I *do* make one request of you—and 'tis therefore, perhaps, as well as for the other reason, that I send my packet to you, first of all:—I *do* beseech you to find out what has become of my dear brother—to use every, every effort to find him out — and, as soon as possible, let him have what I have written to him, and for him. Perhaps it may send him to my side again—and in doing so, oh, perhaps it may turn him from some course that, for my sake—and it can only

be for my sake, *now*—he ought not to go upon. Do this, Lord Lintern, and, after all, I will bless you and pray for you.

BESSY ALLAN.

If Lord Lintern had read this letter eagerly, the writing to which it referred him now absorbed his very soul. It moved him, too, more than he had ever been moved before, except, perhaps, upon the occasion of his wife's death. He could not go on with it continuously; often he stopped, sinking back in his chair; often he stood up, and walked, in deep affliction, about the room. It was long ere he completed his perusal of it. And he had not removed it from before him, when a servant entered to announce Mr. Snow, and another gentleman.

Mr. Snow, upon entering the room, saw that he had been shedding tears: and it was with delight and surprise, strangely mingled, that he now received and returned the Viscount's warm greetings. In fact, Lord Lintern wrung the hand of the man whom, at their last meeting, he had treated scarcely as one gentleman treats another, even if they stand on terms of hostility. Mr. Snow felt great and natural

anxiety to know the cause of such a happy change of manner—indeed of character: he strongly presumed it bore relation to circumstances and persons about which and whom he was deeply interested; but he forbore untimely questions, and contented himself with allowing things to appear, of their own accord.

He presented Mr. Graves.

"I have already made acquaintance with Mr. Graves's name, Sir," answered the Viscount, bowing graciously—"'tis here, in a letter I received this morning."

He presented his solicitor's letter, and resumed; "and I return Mr. Graves my best thanks for his able assistance in the investigation to which the letter refers."

"I only did my duty, as a professional man, Lord Lintern," said Graves—"urged on, indeed, by my anxiety for the interests and happiness of a dear and long-loved friend."

"Am I to understand, Sir, that you mean Mr. Michael Mutford?" Graves assented.

"And that your visit, here, this morning, is still in his behalf, Mr. Graves?"

"Yes, my Lord; I consider myself his legal representative, as well as private friend."

"In that case, Sir"—Lord Lintern arose —"in that case, gentlemen, pray wait, one moment."

He left the room. The new friends wondered what was to happen. They heard him go up stairs. He returned, carrying a tin box, which he had taken out of his iron strong-box. He laid it on the table, to Graves's hand, put a key beside it, and said—

"Mr. Graves, you will there find all the title-deeds, and other legal documents, by virtue of which I hold the property of others—or rather have held it. 'Tis in my possession no longer. It never could have been if—if—" his voice changed, and he raised up his clenched hands as he added, vehemently—"Gentlemen, no matter what my conduct may have seemed in this lawsuit,—no matter how severely I may have seemed to insist upon what I thought my right—no matter what some have suffered from my hostility, provoked or unprovoked as it may have been—by the honour, and upon the word and truth of man—I never, never harboured a suspicion, till a few days ago, that I had succeeded at law by a perjured witness and a forged document!"

"No one has ever thought so, my Lord,—no human being thinks so," answered Graves; "on the contrary, every one knows—and gives you credit accordingly—that you have supplied, under your own hand, the first instructions for an investigation of the truth."

"I thank you, again, Sir—I thank you, Mr. Graves." The old Viscount spoke his first acknowledgment, bowing proudly, though not unkindly: at the second he offered Graves his hand. "And now, Mr. Snow, while our friend examines the contents of that box, allow me a word."—He took Mr. Snow aside—"I have lived a long life, already, Sir, and to my recollection, never did towards man what I now hasten to do before you—I ask your pardon, Sir."

"My dear lord, say no such words; they are indeed unnecessary," replied Mr. Snow, taking his hand, and looking much more confused, if not humiliated, than the penitent himself—"on my word, Lord Lintern, I remember nothing that can call for this."

"But I do, Mr. Snow; without allusion to any thing that has happened some months ago, I will only say that, last Sunday, I acted towards you as I should not have done;—nay,

my whole conduct on that occasion was wrong; my whole thoughts and feelings: I wronged this poor Mutford; he knew, and he knows nothing of my daughter's disappearance; so much I have since ascertained—though I only take him on his own word:—and I wronged her, too, Sir, to suppose—at least to assure myself so suddenly that she could act so very badly. And now, Sir, it remains but to say this to you: whenever you write to her—and I pray you, let it be as soon as you can—tell Ellen that her own house is open to receive her, with her own father to welcome her to it, and protect her in it."—As he spoke, the old man's heart warmed with the re-flowing feeling of having some one to love him.

"Thanks, thanks, Lord Lintern," said Mr. Snow, again offering his hand—"we all thank you:—we all ought to do so;—but, in one thing only, I venture to gainsay what you require:—I will not—pardon me—but I will *not* write to Lady Ellen, coldly repeating your sentiments towards her; you must write yourself, my dear Lord,—indeed you must: and, to supply you with her present address, there is the letter I had the pleasure of receiving from her last Sun-

day;—it will inform you where she is;—in France, a little way from the coast; and with whom; with her old and excellent Planche, and Planche's brother, a married clergyman; and you will see that it is Planche you have to blame for finding her out, in Wales, and secretly corresponding with her, and, in fact, arranging the whole little plot of her elopement."

Lord Lintern found, indeed, these facts authenticated in his daughter's letter, as well as the others for which Mr. Snow had been his immediate authority, last Sunday. "Well: and I will write to her this very post," he said, as he handed back the letter to its owner.

"I do believe this box contains all the necessary documents," now interrupted Graves, having finished his cautious, barrister-like investigation of its contents.

"Keep them, then, in trust, for your friend," said the Viscount.

"I will, my Lord—and now 'tis my turn to thank your Lordship; and I do so, for the honour, as well as the pleasure, of the trust you repose in me; and also in Mutford's name, for the very prompt and generous way in which, at the instant of proof, you recog-

nise his claim, and put him in possession of his right."

"He would not let you thank me, in *his* name, at least, if he were at hand to prevent you, Mr. Graves."

"Pardon me, my Lord, he would: I know him better than he knows himself; that is, I know him *to be* better, than, in his late, and, I suppose, present mood, he allows himself, even to himself, to be. There are no hating qualities, in Mutford; and so, I have often told him, though he would *argue* with me upon the point;—momentary detestation, worked up by rage, I know he is exceedingly capable of; but for hatred — the long, dark, brooding thing which I understand to be hatred—never was a much less competent person. But now, my lord, having so happily, so very happily, closed our first case, of this morning, will you permit us to pass to another?"

"What — other?" — Lord Lintern's hard, even voice failed him, and he slightly changed colour.

"My dear Lord," said Mr. Snow,—"if you have read the whole of Lady Ellen's letter, you have found in it an allusion to ——" in his turn

Mr. Snow hesitated; though sure of the Viscount's sentiments towards the Mutfords, he feared to mention the name that was on his tongue. Lord Lintern did so for him.

"Allusion to my son—my elder son. Yes, Sir, and I was thinking of that."

"Allow us to ask, my Lord—"

"What you like, Sir—what you like, gentlemen—" interrupted Lord Lintern, impatiently, as Mr. Snow paused a second time. In fact, the father saw approaching him the most painful, and the most humiliating topic connected with the whole business in hand, and a twitch of his old arbitrary humour, hitherto always near to save him from self-accusation, and, above all, from admission of great error, now shot across his mind.

"Then, my Lord, have you ever been informed that your elder son procured, from the most eminent medical practitioners in a certain branch, documents at issue with a certificate signed by a gentleman, their avowed inferior in practice, professional rank, and public trust and confidence?"

"Never, Sir," answered Lord Lintern, his rising impatience allayed by eager interest.

" Such is the case, however," said Graves.

" And where are those documents ?"

" They were given by your elder son, my Lord, to one whom he believed to be a trustworthy person, that they might be conveyed, through me, to you."

" And you have them, Mr. Graves ?"

" They never reached me. The person so trusted broke his trust."

" His name, Sir ?" asked Lord Lintern, evidently in strong misgivings.

" The Honourable George Allan."

" That name again !" — cried the father, starting up : " and doubtless," he continued, as if speaking to himself—" doubtless this new piece of treachery occurred a little before the time that he sent me information where Augustus could be found in London—having, as he said, discovered it by chance."

In an absent manner Lord Lintern turned to the window and gazed out upon the angle of the old green-house, visible from where he stood. The new friends heard him sigh profoundly. They understood, generally, at least, what was working in his breast, and allowing it play, silently awaited his turning round again.

He did so, in a short time, and, resuming his seat, and, passing his hand across his forehead, addressed Graves.

"Doubtless, Sir, you know where to find your friend?"

"That brings up our last, and, perhaps, after all, our most important topic, Lord Lintern. I am really quite ignorant of his movements at present:" and Graves went on to express, though in guarded terms, his great anxiety for his friend's safety, and his hopes that Lord Lintern himself might be able to gratify him with some information on the subject.

The Viscount regretted that it was quite out of his power to do so; he did not even admit his having seen Mutford the night before, nor—in deference to the still lingering haughtiness of his nature, or his habits—could he bring himself to allude to the leave-taking letter which Mutford had sent him from on board the Miss Molly.

"However," he resumed, after a pause—"there is one in waiting, who, perhaps, may give us some account of him; a man who came to

the house, hours ago, to have an audience of me in my magisterial capacity, though I was then too deeply engaged in other matters—" (he meant reading Bessy's packet)—" to pay any attention to him—and so he was bid to wait ;—excuse me now a moment, while I go out to speak with him."

Lord Lintern withdrew. Graves and Mr. Snow congratulated each other heartily, in his absence, upon the good morning's work they had got through. He returned, with a countenance and air of alarm and regret ; and, in answer to hasty questions from Graves, communicated the certain intelligence that Michael Mutford had gone across the channel, the night before, in the capacity of commander of a smuggling lugger.

Both gentlemen heard this news in consternation. Graves started doubts of its truth. Lord Lintern might be misinformed, he said.

" Impossible," his Lordship replied ; the person who supplied the information was to be implicitly depended upon ; he spoke from the evidence of his own ears and eyes, and, in consequence, in fact, of having been employed by

him, Lord Lintern, to learn tidings of Mutford; "and," added his Lordship, "my habits, in public business, if nothing else, make it difficult to impose on *me* by a false story, and *I* believe the man."

"And can your informant say what was the probable destination of the smuggler?" asked Graves.

"Yes—he knew it distinctly—Boulogne."

"I will pursue him this instant!"—cried the anxious friend:—"we are upon the coast, and surely a boat, of some kind or other, can be procured directly, or at least within some miles, for a good fee—" He snatched up his tin box, and with adieus to Lord Lintern and Mr. Snow was leaving the room. Lord Lintern entreated him to stay, one moment: then, folding up Bessy's writing in the cover directed to her brother, handed it to Graves, and said, solemnly and impressively—"The instant you meet him, be sure to give him that; 'tis from his sister."

Again Graves was hurrying off, again he was requested to stay; it was Mr. Snow who now spoke—"Wait but till Lord Lintern gives me

one line to his daughter—instead of sending it by post, as he intended—and I will accompany you, Mr. Graves."

Lord Lintern sat down and wrote to Lady Ellen, a short but sufficient letter, and the moment after he had given it to Mr. Snow, he was alone.

We pay Samuel Geeson the compliment of recurring to him once again.

Mutford was right in believing that Mr. Linnock had not succeeded in conciliating him after the little *exposé*, about good Mrs. Fox's purse. The first proof of doggedness which Sam gave was refusing to form one of the crew of the fortunate Miss Molly, upon her that night's voyage. "No," he said, "mother would be a-wanting of him for some time to come: and he didn't know, neither, if she half-liked his going for a smuggler no more; she took it so to heart that he wouldn't give his mind to getting of his bread in as honest a way, —the way he was brought up to—:" and after other speeches of about as much import, he strode homeward.

By the light of the moon, from the top of a hill, on the horse-road leading to the sea-side

villages, he soon saw what he had come that way to see—for the path through the fields was much shorter for pedestrians; and, increasing his graceless strides, Sam gave "good night," in a few minutes, to Mrs. Fox, who, to save the hire of a carter, was driving herself, her eggs, and other things, as fast and as well as she could towards her husband's door.

"Good night, Mas'r Geeson," she answered, scarce able to suppress the alarm she felt at Sam's sudden appearance at her side, on so lonely a road, after what had happened—and all her property—to say nothing of the redeemed purse—with her, too.

"That bayn't the way to make him go along, Miss's," resumed Sam, as Mrs. Fox whipped her horse hard, and mismanaged his bridle, so as to induce him to tack from side to side of the road.

"Oh, I'll get him on, never you fear, Mas'r Geeson," she said, again whipping the horse, and then so directing him as to run his nose against a hedge, to her left-hand.

Sam laughed inordinately; stepped to her relief; led the horse into the middle of the road, and again assured her she knew nothing

of the matter in hand, and that it would be much better for her to allow him to get up, at her side, and drive for her.

"No, no, — much obleeged," she replied, gasping for breath.

"Why, you bayn't afeard, Miss's?"— —

"Afeard, Mas'r Geeson?" quickly interrupting him—"what would make me afeard o' you, I'd be glad to know?"—and Mrs. Fox tried to laugh, in her turn.

"I didn't say no such thing, Miss's, as what you *be* afeard o' *me;* nor warn't a-going to say it, neither; what would put it into my head? we don't owe one another no ill-will, *I'm* sure;—no; I war only going to ax you if you were afeard I couln't drive, or didn't know how; but, don't you remember, Miss's, for how long a time I war carter to farmer Oldbury?"

Mrs. Fox remembered it well, and complimented Sam upon his well-known mastery over the whip, while he held the office spoken of: and it was not any distrust of his skill that induced her to decline his offer; no such thing; she only wished "not to give trouble to nobody, when she could manage for herself:" and so,

she whipped her horse again, and, starting off in a gallop, wished Sam good night.

For a little way, her road was favourable. Anon, it was up-hill, again, and heavy and difficult, from mire and ruts. As her beast now toiled slowly upward—"I say, Miss's," resumed Sam, as close as ever to her—"that be a shabby trick as Mas'r Linnock has just played me—bayn't it now?"

"Indeed it be, Mas'r Geeson."

"To go for to 'spect me of common robbing of you, Miss's, when he knew as well as you did, it was all fun, like, and nothing else?"

"To be sure, to be sure," assented Mrs. Fox.

"Well," resumed Sam, after a considerable pause, "and if ever I seed such a grand house as the magistrate's, Lord Lintern's, I be blowed, Miss's."

"Quite a grand house, indeed, Mas'r Geeson"—and Mrs. Fox's confidence began to return, at this unexpected change of subject.

"You 've often been t' it, Miss's?"

Often, Mrs. Fox answered, with clothes which she had helped to make up for the family.

"And through it, Miss's?"

"Once through it, room after room," Mrs. Fox admitted: one day when the family were all out, and her friend, Mrs. Halpin, the housekeeper, yielded to her wish to see the splendours of the mansion.

"And be any other room in it so fine as the justice-room, below stairs?" continued Sam.

Mrs. Fox replied that the justice-room was the least grand in the house; that the parlours, drawing-rooms, and even bed-rooms, went beyond her powers of description.

"And the old Lord's own bed-room,—the grandest of any, *I* know?"

Yes—of any of the bed-rooms. And, upon this, Samuel gradually and adroitly induced a description of its articles of furniture—and—what Mrs. Fox thought a little odd—its situation with respect to the other rooms, up-stairs.

"Well, I be blowed!—see what it be to be rich folk, Miss's."—He allowed himself to ponder a long while, and then suddenly changed the topic a second time.

"And so, Miss's, you be so glad to get home to poor Mas'r Fox, to-night?"

Mrs. Fox, like an honest wife, did not conceal

the yearnings of her heart and soul once more to see her husband.

"The same he does by you, *I* know, Miss's."

Yes—Mrs. Fox was sure he would respond her sentiments if he was aware of her being at present on the road to him.

Sam laughed down in his very throat and breast, shaking his shoulders at every low peal. Mrs. Fox begged to be made acquainted with the cause of his mirth.

"Nothing;—nothing at all; I was only a thinking what *you* would be a-thinking, Miss's, as he might be a-doing, to-night, s'posing he don't know—(which he don't—) you be so near him, Miss's?"

Let her see; sleeping sound in his bed, after putting the young uns to-sleep, first—barring some little job of shoe-mending didn't keep him up later than usual;—that was what Mas'r Fox was doing, that moment, *she* knew.

Her companion repeated his laugh, coughing through it, and stopping an instant, on the road, to raise up his bent knee, as an accompaniment to it.

Again Mrs. Fox, and now not with a mind at rest, called for an explanation. Samuel gave

it in detail. Her cries of astonishment, of anger, of grief, of outraged love and dignity — her cries of real crying—her shrieking fit, at last, disturbed the quiet of the fair night, and of the lonesome and picturesque situation. — If ever she had whipped her horse, she whipped him now; and if ever she ran him against the road-side, she ran him now. In fact, great as was the rage in which her big thoughts devoured the road between her and home, she could not make way, at all. Sam Geeson thought this a good opportunity for renewing his former offer of kind services; and what with her impatience to be at home, her eventual misgivings of her own skill in driving, and the spirit of confidence engendered by Sam's generous information, all her late distrust of him vanished, and, with him for her charioteer, the little village of her nativity, and of her youthful loves with the ungrateful Fox, soon broke upon her view.

Sam arranged a commendable plan for her as they journeyed along; and upon it, she agreed to act, with his kind assistance. The cart and horse were left in charge of the proprietor of a public-house, outside the village. They walked

quickly, arm in arm, to the doomed house. Sam posted her, out of view from within, at the jamb of the street-door. He repaired, himself, to the back of the premises. At a window, there situated, he knocked loudly.

"Who be there, at this time o' night?" valiantly questioned Mas'r Fox.

"Get up, get up, Mas'r Fox, your woman be on the road from the farm-house, with the eggs for the shop! get up!"—and Sam thundered at the window-shutter.

"Well, I be blowed!" ejaculated Fox.

"You be, you be, if you knowed but all!" answered Sam.

"How near be she?"—demanded the anxious husband, after a short pause, during which Sam caught low, wailing murmurs, and quick whispers, and other slight noises.

"How near?—I tell you I passed her, running fast, and she sitting on her eggs, in the cart, only a little way outside the village—Get up!"—

"Well, I *be* getting up, Sam Geeson, and you've no call to keep thumping and holloring at that 'ere windor."—

"Very well—good night"—and Sam strode

heavily away, in order that Fox might hear him. He had scarce regained his companion of the road, at the street door, when bar and lock began to give signals of its soon being opened: Mrs. Fox settled her portly and tall figure, quite upright against the wall, and her fingers worked, anticipatingly. Sam also kept out of sight. The door *did* open—and Fox's voice was heard in a whisper:—

"Dart straight across the road like a swallow!"

"Oh, *won't* I?"—responded somebody—and the attempt to dart was made.

"Oh, *will* you?"—and by a fierce counter-dart, straight across the door-way, the stalworth Mrs. Fox had that somebody in her hands.

Sagacious reader, it is for you to conjure up to yourself the picture of the scene which followed.

After merely allowing the poor victim of his vengeance to catch a glimpse of him, and merely saying—"Old girl—mother be a-wanting you, in-doors, to-night"—Samuel Geeson turned off, chuckling very much, and bent his steps towards Lord Lintern's mansion.

"A little help from our Custom-house, and a

little more from this here old miser, and Sam Geeson bids 'em all good bye, for ever and a day—jigger him, if he don't," was Samuel's often-repeated resolve, on the road.

Arrived at the porter's lodge, he rang for admission up to the house, on particular business, which could not be delayed: a voice, inside the lodge, sharply answered that it must: that Lord Lintern never received any one on business after a certain hour, each day, not to speak of such an unseasonable hour of the night; that every one in the house was a-bed; that every honest person out of it, ought to be; and, finally, as is usual on such occasions, the claimant for admission was well rated, and commanded to go about his business.

"For all that," said Sam to himself, apostrophising the house, as he glanced towards it —"for all that, old chap, I sleep under your fine blue-slate roof, to-morrow night, if I can't this here night:"—and, full of serious reverie, he walked to a spot from which, without observation, he could contemplate the front of the mansion, number its windows, and conjecture which of them had the honour of admitting the daylight into Lord Lintern's sleeping-chamber.

While thus engaged, a man whom he knew, walked hastily, though stealthily, up to the avenue gate, and there paused a moment. He was, in fact, a supernumerary in the service of the Miss Molly.

"Well, now!" ejaculated Sam's mind—"if another has had the same thought with me, and comes to take it out o' my head, while I be a-coaxing of it!"

He continued to watch his friend. The man pulled off his old hat, took a letter out of it, looked at the letter, put it up again, and then cautiously clambered over the gate, and disappeared along the shade of the avenue.

Sam's suspicions were much allayed. They vanished entirely, and left him comfortable, when the bearer of Mutford's letter to Lord Lintern re-appeared, running to the gate, again cleared it, and continued running towards the village.

Soon after breakfast-hour, next morning, he presented himself at the door of the house he so much wished to sleep a night in, and asked to see Lord Lintern. We know he was refused an immediate audience. Sam could wait, however.

It was the middle of the day when Lord Lintern came out to him to ask if he knew any thing about Michael Mutford. After the departure of Graves and Mr. Snow, Lord Lintern remained more than an hour, without sending out for him. Even this did not make the 'prentice very impatient. "It does as well, if not better, the later I see him," he reflected.

At length, as the winter-day waned late, Lord Lintern came out of his library, into the hall. Sam stood up, off a form, and, slicking down his whitish hair on his forehead, bowed clumsily, and coughed, to challenge his Lordship's notice. The Viscount stopped short at seeing him, as if he had quite forgotten he had been in waiting, and then commanded him to pass into the library.

It was to give information of where and when the Miss Molly could be come upon, the next night, that he called, he said.

"You must give your information at the Custom-house. It is not my business to catch smugglers," answered Lord Lintern—perhaps with a dislike to interest himself in an affair which might affect the safety of Michael Mutford.

Sam knew that very well. But, he was suspected, and watched, and, he declared, to be seen going near the custom-house would be as much as his life was worth.

"Write to them, then."

Sam shuffled on his feet, again smoothed down his locks, over his forehead, and lamented his ignorance of the art of writing.

"Well—get some one to write for you."

"That would be discovering on hisself, foreright," but if his Lordship would write—or call —trusting no other person with the secret—that was all the applicant required.

Lord Lintern, viewing the thing required at his hands as rigorously a part of his duty as a magistrate, demanded the particulars; took a note of them from Sam's dictation, and promised to communicate with the Custom-house authorities, early next morning.

Still the 'prentice stood where he was, and showed no symptoms of going away.

"Your business is ended, I think?"

"Yes, so far," Sam was thankful; "but there was just one other little request he had to make of his Lordship, and he depended on his Lordship's goodness to take it well of him. He had

mentioned how closely watched he was, and certain people had seen him coming up to the house, to-day; and he did not know who might be waiting for him, along the road; and, in fact, he had fears for his life, particularly as the road was lonesome, at parts, and the evening would soon fall, and—

"Do say, in a word, what you want me to do, Sir," interrupted Lord Lintern—"my time is precious."

In a word, then, the applicant was afraid to venture homeward, at present, and if his Lordship would give orders to let him stay in the house that night—the only house in the parish where he could be safe—the life of an innocent and an honest lad might be his own.

Thus appealed to, and anxious to get himself free of the business before him, Lord Lintern rang his bell, and Samuel was soon taken under competent protection for the night.

To gain this point he had slightly strayed from the strict truth, only two or three times, in his statements to the Viscount. First, when he averred that he was suspected and watched—for, in reality, none of his friends were yet aware of his intentions towards them; secondly,

when he alluded to the Custom-house as a place to which he had not been—for, in reality, there he had been, slyly, before he arrived at Lord Lintern's, that morning—ay, and did not quit it without a manifestation of Custom-house gratitude in his pocket; and thirdly, when he had bewailed the neglected state of his education in regard of writing—for, in reality, Sam could put letters together, after a manner.

THE time that Lord Lintern had kept the 'prentice waiting, after the departure of Mr. Snow and Graves, he had occupied in writing a letter to his son Augustus, or rather in trying to write one. He began his task many times, and as often gave it up; after having proceeded some way with it, sheet after sheet was blotted, torn, and flung into the fire.

Notwithstanding the considerable change in the Viscount's character, enough of his old leaven remained within him, to make the task a difficult one. He wrote, if he wrote at all, to conciliate. Conciliation could not appear, without admissions of error; and these, from such a father, to such a son, after all that had happened, were gall and wormwood — hair-cloth on his body—ashes in his mouth.

He often started aside, too, in his efforts, and put down his pen at another view of the case.

Was it yet demonstrated that Augustus Allan had not been mad?—Was it yet demonstrated that he did not continue so?—As had before occurred to Lintern that morning, his calm and triste manner might only be a subsiding, for a time, of furious delirium into melancholy madness, and who could tell how soon the treacherous quiet might again break out in fury?

True, Augustus was not mad, merely because he had reported the confession of the perjured witness—it now seemed most probable that such a confession had been made. But had there not been other and more glaring symptoms of mental derangement, upon which the doctor had grounded his certificate?—savage violence—personal opposition to his father—jumping out through a window—running away from home—to say nothing of the wasteful and unmeaning extravagance in money-matters, which little less than madness could account for?

It was at a repeated consideration of these alarming facts that Lord Lintern abandoned his pen, in uncertainty and impatience, left his study, and passed into the hall, as we have seen him do.

After re-entering it with Sam Geeson, and

disposing of that individual, he recollected, for the first time, since morning, that he had given orders for the appearance before him of the village surgeon. This he grappled at as a stay and guidance, in his present wavering state of mind. He rang his bell to know if Mr. Witson was in waiting. The gentleman had just entered the house. "What! and only then entered it, that day?"—and Lord Lintern relieved himself by inveighing against the disrespectful tardiness of Mr. Witson.

We wish to account for the surgeon's late visit, so far as it seems possible to do so.

"Emily," my dear, he said, to his pale and pregnant lady, as they sat together at breakfast, in one of the apartments of the old green-house, adapted, at Lord Lintern's expense, to their convenience—"Emily, my dear, this has been a useful patient to us."

Emily, in the act of drinking a cup of tea, shook her head gravely, in assent.

"I find, by looking over the books, that he has done more for us, within the year, than the surgery and the lad in the village, and my occasional patients together."

"I told you it would be so, Witson."

" And what d' you think of losing him?"

" Losing him?" — and the anxious spouse laid down her cup and saucer, and looked at her husband; " why should we lose him?—what can any one bring against us on his account?—what have we left undone, that it was our duty to do, towards him?—has he ever got loose since *we* were sent in here to take care of him?"

" 'Tisn't that, Emily, my dear;—but, somehow, his father begins to think that he won't have need of our taking care of him much longer."

" What, Witson!" Emily continued, in alarm, " Any thing of that letter to you from his brother which—I must say, as I always said—you lost so very stoopidly?"

" I don't know, my dear: I only know that one of the keepers, Richards, has just told me of a meeting between our patient and Lord Lintern, this morning, and of something the old man said to Richards, afterwards;" and at the request of his wife, Mr. Witson rehearsed what we are already acquainted with.

"Well, and is that all?—and what 's there to be afeard of, in that?—Go over to the old

man the first thing after breakfast—go directly!"

"And go, still of the same mind on the case, Emily?"

"Why not? what questions *you do* ask! —what should change your mind?"

"I will then"—and Mr. Witson valiantly manned his little cringing, nervous manner, and tried to strengthen the feeble, ever-smiling expression of his round, soft, vacant face, as he drew on his boots to wait on Lord Lintern.

He was approaching the hall-door when the appearance at it of Graves and Mr. Snow drove him back, in trepidation, to his spouse. He knew, they both knew, that one of the gentlemen had long been leagued with Lady Ellen, and even with his patient, to procure certain testimonials; they knew also something of the fate of the documents which Augustus had forwarded to Graves, but which had never been received by the barrister;—and, therefore, the visit of the two gentlemen to the Viscount now imparted to them a common alarm. Not that they could decide who Graves was: *had* they recognised him as the man of law of whom they

had heard, their tremors would, perhaps, have better answered our purpose;—they only set him down, in their own minds, for one of the eminent medical practitioners, who had certified Augustus's sanity, now ferreted out, and produced before Lord Lintern, by the officious Mr. Snow.

"I need not *go*, now, of my own accord, Emily—I shall soon be sent for," said Witson, sinking in a chair.

After railing at his want of spirit, though she shared his misgivings, Mrs. Witson called her husband to a consultation, and the best measures to be taken, under the circumstances, were agreed upon, in case he should be sent for.

No summons arrived; Graves and Mr. Snow were seen taking their departure; Mr. Witson and his Emily partially recovered their courage. It was all a false alarm, she said, and he ought not now to lose another moment in waiting upon Lord Lintern.

Again the poverty-stricken surgeon was about to issue forth. His good genius possessed him with another fear: a fear of the keeper, Richards. That man had reported to him certain occurrences of the morning, in a very expressive

way; and, with the permission of his wife, he went to confer with Richards.

The man was sitting alone, in a little antechamber, immediately outside Augustus's study. Genial spirits, or even dissimilar ones, having a thought in common, soon come to an understanding. Richards had found the letter which Mr. Witson had lost, and he would send it in to Lord Lintern if he was not paid a specific sum. Future distress stared Witson in the face, if he complied with the terms; but, to avoid the greater horrors of exposure, he did give the money, and got up his letter.

"All right, now, Sir," said Richards;—"and I hope this be not the last little trifle of cash will come into your hands, as well as mine, for our future care of your patient."

Witson returned to his wife, hoping to be praised for what he had done. Her shrewd, natural sense, made her look beyond the present patched-up arrangement, and—now with grounds to stand upon—she wholly changed her views of the measures to be taken. In the power of Richards, she saw that she and her husband could not sleep securely a day. He either would continue to tax them, or, upon the pro-

mise of a good bribe, betray them to the friends of Augustus Allan. And a third time she commanded the surgeon to attend his patron, but now with new instructions; and, in reality, he went.

After waiting, impatiently and contemptuously, till Mr. Witson should have done cringing inside his study-door, and have slid himself nervously upon a chair, Lord Lintern, abruptly enough, asked the question he wished to have answered.

"Is your patient better or worse, of late, Sir?"

"Better, much better, my lord."

"*How* much, Mr. Witson?"

"Why, really, my Lord—as to exactly and justly *how* much, your lordship will surely see that a country practitioner, merely—"

"Can speak his own mind, Sir, at least—and I ask no more—I do not wish to make you accountable for the minds of other men."

"Then, my Lord, to speak my own mind, justly,—that is—my own mind, of myself, and not—"

"In a word, Sir, pray tell me, is the Honourable Augustus Allan, in your private

opinion—there, Sir—allow me—" Lord Lintern handed a bank note—" insane or not, at present?"

" Certainly not *insane*, my lord," dwelling on the word, as if to reserve to himself a care for refining away, in future, though no good to come of such a course presented itself to his weak mind.

" Excuse me, Mr. Witson—*not insane*, I conclude to mean *sane*—being no metaphysician, in such cases at least; and now, Sir, permit me another question—for *how long a time* has my son *not been* insane?"

" Why, upon my word, my Lord, justly—"

" For a day, Sir?"

" Oh, yes, my Lord—for more than a day, certainly."

" For a week?"

The week, after sufficient hesitation, was admitted. A month was admitted. Three months. Six months. Lord Lintern's withering rage—withering to such a man as was before him—arose; he started from his chair, imprecating; the unfortunate Witson stood up, along with him, and, barely not kneeling, held out a letter and said—

" Read that, my Lord, considering first what I have to say—I only urge two things on your lordship—I was and am a struggling man, —and, as I said before—and, as you know, —a country-practitioner only—and—no matter what I might have thought, myself, from my own personal observations—there was, in the first case,—I mean the second case—the certificate, certainly, of a well-known gentleman in town—and then, my lord—then, as you will see—"

" As I *do* see—base creature!" interrupted Lord Lintern, trembling with passion—he had been reading the letter,—" Yes, as I do see; you have taken a bribe from the brother, Sir, of your poor patient; and, upon that, and the promise of another, you have permitted me—you, and the London murderer, your fit colleague—tell me, Sir! on your life! by your fear of my vengeance! answer me, this moment! —when, at my instance, your young correspondent—he who had the heart and mind, young as he is, to pen this letter, though I believe, under counsel from others—when he, Mr. Village Surgeon, was about to go up to town for a doctor—did he, or did he not, Sir, ask your

advice beforehand? He did! you need not answer! you look it! My God, my God! what an accursed plot this is! Out of my way, man!" and, as Witson once more attempted to speak, Lord Lintern passed him, left the house, and rapidly walked towards the prison of his elder son.

Not noticing the keepers whom he met in the ante-chamber, he made way at once into Augustus's sitting-room. He had not put on a hat on leaving his house, and the wind had blown his grey hairs about his face, and given to it, along with his passion, an unusually high colour. From a table, at which preparations had been made for his frugal dinner, Augustus turned, and looked with amazement to his father. The young man had been sitting, abstractedly, his head resting on his hand, and he was carefully, and even elegantly dressed, for the hour of dinner. Lord Lintern checked his hasty step, and his stern air changed, the moment he entered the little apartment, and had glanced at his son, and then around him. Augustus Allan arose, and stood erect before him.

"I keep my promise with you, Augustus,"

said Lord Lintern; "I answer your question of this morning, before the day has quite gone down: will you give up your dinner here, to-day, and dine with me?—Your arm—if you are willing—" he motioned. Augustus, as if not able to speak, hastily gave his arm; his father took it eagerly; clung to it, led him through the ante-chamber, and saying to the keepers, "No person waits on us," issued from the sad prison-house, and walked with Augustus, hastily, and in perfect silence across the lawn.

The astonished servants of his household saw him lead his son up to a drawing-room. The moment they entered it, he called loudly for lights. When those were brought, the attendant noticed that Augustus stood leaning against a sofa, looking downward, while his father walked hastily about the room. Neither spoke a word.

In fact, not a word had yet been spoken between them since they had left the old greenhouse, together; and after they were left alone, by the servant who brought in the lights—(and strange were Lord Lintern's sudden motives for so loudly ordering lights, the moment he found

himself with Augustus, in a darksome room)—still they remained silent.

"Sit down, Augustus;" said Lord Lintern, at length, as he still paced the room.

Augustus obeyed. Whenever he had an unobserved opportunity, his eye followed his father: and he said, at length, in a low, deep tone at which his father thrilled——"Something has happened to agitate your Lordship."

"Lordship!"—The father took a lamp from a table; beckoned him to his side; held up the lamp to a full-length portrait, and asked—"Who was that?"

"My mother—my good mother," answered Augustus.

Lord Lintern replaced the lamp, stood before him, and while their eyes met, asked again—"And I, Augustus, was her husband?" His hand moved irresolutely, at his side.

"And my father," added the young man.

"*Then?*"—Lord Lintern motioned towards the picture; Augustus quickly understood that he meant—"*was* your father, while *she* lived?" and to the question he replied,—after another look into Lord Lintern's eyes, and a self-

assurance that they were fortunately though, as yet, mysteriously changed towards him—" and you *are*."

Their hands touched, as never before they had touched; gradually they felt each other's pressure and grasp; the old man passed his left-hand, once or twice, along the right arm which his right hand detained; it rested on his son's shoulder; his worn cheek reclined on it, his worn cheek pressed the all but as worn one of Augustus;—the son heard a small checked piercing sob; his arms surrounded his father; and the tears of his father, which he felt on his face, obliterated the whole past in his heart.

All the words they had as yet spoken have been reported: and they sat, side by side, before the cheerful fire, Lord Lintern's hand on Augustus's knee, and Augustus's on it, placed there by his father, still quite silent, until the notice to dinner. Then they went down stairs, arm in arm, and confronted one another at the table which for some time had not had a second guest, and the ordinary words which pass at dinner between the guardians of separate dishes, were the first that they uncon-

strainedly interchanged. It was not very antique, then, to ask to "take wine," at dinner; the inquisitive attendants watched them as they raised their glasses, and read their hearts in their mutual smile.

Lord Lintern praised the wine. Augustus agreed that it was very good, and followed his father's example in filling another glass. He did not notice that his father's looks expressed doubt, if not disapprobation of this quick drinking on the part of an invalid—at least of one who, for a long time, had not been used to the excitement of wine. And Lord Lintern could scarce hinder himself from going on to reflect, that if the slightest tendency to mental wavering had really ever afflicted his son, the present indulgence might perhaps revive it. So ridden had he been by the conviction of Augustus's insanity, that he could not even yet distinctly throw off the impression. Always carried away by impulses, it had seemed to him, indeed, as clear as the daylight, after the detection of Witson, that the young man was, and ever had been, in his perfect senses; but now that the passion of that moment had subsided, he was not able to keep himself fixed to certainty.

There was a peculiar, perhaps a unique power and quickness in Augustus's large jetty eyes; a depth, at one moment, as if his thoughts were material rays, and had hidden themselves in the chamber of vision; and a flash, the next moment, as if they had suddenly matured themselves to expression, and burst out, dispersing, and manifesting themselves in splendours of light. It was glorious to look upon them, if the spectator felt no misgiving of the perfect sanity of the mind they illustrated. Yet, on the other hand, if such a misgiving existed, those magnificent eyes were calculated to confirm it. And, in the doubt in which Lord Lintern now watched them, we may decide which of the two effects they produced.

He resolved to drink no more wine that day, at dinner, lest Augustus should follow his example. He called for water. Augustus did so too. This was a relief, yet Lord Lintern did not sit quite at his ease.

He began general topics. He spoke of literature; Augustus answered him eloquently, enthusiastically. Lord Lintern could detect no wandering, but the eloquence and the enthusiasm were a little too much for him.

Politics came round. After a few general theories, applicable to all civilized countries, all civilized people and their governments, Augustus showed no interest in the subject. His father did not like that. Even at Augustus's age, he thought a sound mind would not turn away from politics, in apprehension it seemed of its own want of patient power to divide and comprehend, in detail, a dry but all important topic. But he mistook; Augustus turned from that topic only in an indifference which was the result of, for his age, a close examination of it.

Lord Lintern hesitated if he should start another subject, the test, he believed, of mental soundness; his own favourite one; his metaphysics. At length he resolved to do so. He was met with great talent, reading, individual thinking, and temper. For some time the father and son seemed to make way, together. Anon, they differed—materially, radically. Lord Lintern did his best to keep his ground, and his good-humour together; Augustus, without a change in his always vivacious manner, edged him off it, inch by inch. When nearly beaten, he recollected that, virtually, Augustus's system much resembled parts of Mr. Snow's sermon,

although all religious illustrations were kept out of view. He grew silent and thoughtful.

Augustus also became silent. It would appear that, under present circumstances, he controlled himself from broaching any topic, or asking any question which might lead to one, leaving the choice and direction of the conversation wholly to his father.

It was growing late, and they sat together, since the metaphysical discussion, saying little to one another. Lord Lintern fixed his eyes on Augustus's brow, as the young man held his head downward. For some time the father remarked that, shade after shade, emotion had been stealing over his son's features. He became, at length, pale and red by turns, drew in his lip, breathed hard, and sighed profoundly. Lord Lintern's former fears returned upon him. Augustus addressed him, without raising his eyes.

"Dear father—" he paused.

Lord Lintern inquired, "Well?"

"This night, I have not asked you a single question."

"And, perhaps, you have acted kindly, as well as prudently, Augustus,—for this night."

" Though I have a good many to ask you."

" I know Augustus, I know."

" And not any that would pain you—not any about the past—at least, about what *you* know of *my* past."

" Well, well, let us array all our questions and answers for the morning."

Augustus did not resume for some time; at length he said—" But surely I may inquire after my sister Ellen ?"

" Oh yes," answered Lord Lintern, giving up a rising impatience of not being implicitly obeyed, as the subject proposed caused him a sudden sensation of pleasure: " Oh yes; she is well."

" In the house ?"

" No; but coming home to see us."

" And my other sisters ?"

" Augustus ! do favour me—do *spare* me this evening."

" Well; no more about my other sisters, then.—As to"—his voice broke, he spoke hoarsely, and strong emotion possessed him—" as to my brother George—I hope, I hope, he is not in the house—I hope I may not see him, in it—at least till I hear from him—hear that he has uttered words which he ought, even for his own

sake, to utter—Bad, bad brother!" he continued, sinking his head on his hands—then he suddenly sprang up—"But pardon me, father—I do not obey your request—I do not spare you—but when you know—when you know that, the last time he and I met—in town—my hands were on his throat! that he forced me to lay hands on him!—that—But this is not the way to get myself pardoned for not attending to you this evening—Good night, father,"—he advanced suddenly, and seized his father's hand, and then left the room.

Lord Lintern, though aware, from another and a recent source, of the secret which Augustus was bursting to communicate, did not refer all his agitation to his natural feelings. He had been so accustomed to link together, in Augustus's conduct, vehemence and insanity, that the scarcely controlled burst which he now witnessed called up strong apprehensions in his mind. He regretted that he had so soon emancipated him from the authority of his keepers—he felt half disposed to send for them again, and commission them to sleep in the house; and the strong improbability of their being in the way was his chief reason for rejecting the thought.

Horrible fears possessed him, at length! Horrible fears, sitting alone in his spacious and splendid apartment! Fears which he strove to chase away, but which fastened on him! He chilled under them till he shook with cold, and unconsciously wheeled himself in his luxurious chair to spread his wasted limbs and hands over the half-spent fire.

A noise reached him from some remote part of the house—he held his breath; though faint and indistinct, he construed it into loud voices and shrieks. With a tremulous hand he pulled the bell. A servant entered and reported that it was only Sam Geeson laughing, himself, and making the maids in the laundry laugh at his good stories. Lord Lintern stormed. The servant was leaving the room. He inquired if his son had retired for the night. Yes—the man had lighted him to his chamber. "What chamber?"—Its situation was described. "Did he seem well and calm?"—The servant feared not; his face looked flushed, his eyes troubled—and he was now pacing up and down the chamber.

At a late hour Lord Lintern went up to his own chamber. He carefully locked his door.

He was going to place pistols under his pillow. Nature cried out shame upon him, and he did not.

He lay down, exerting all his mind to banish far away from him the horrible fear!—By comparing circumstances, by accusing himself of harsh suspicions, by prayer—yea, now, by prayer to a God—he strove to banish it. He could not. In the unnerving stillness of the night, it grasped his heart closer. Augustus was still mad! and, once, his father had attributed to his madness, and to his hatred, an atrocious intent!—and he was now free to execute it!—within a chamber of his father—and a frail door nothing against his young strength, made gigantic by delirium! True, he had seemed affectionate and calm before and after dinner; but he could not control himself to the last, and the vehement pressure of his hand at parting was not natural—was forced—and covered a purpose!

Still, even in the midst of a repetition of such thoughts, the wretched father slumbered. But slumbered only to see over him, in his bed, in all the vividness—in the all but truth of night-mare—that knitted brow, those devouring eyes, and that hand raised.

He awoke groaning, and sat up. He strove to assure himself he had but dreamed. He felt the curtains, he listened to the ticking of his watch, on a table. A sensation of blessed relief began to steal over his mind. It was quickly chased away, by reality.

He heard stealing steps from his son's chamber towards his own. He distinctly heard them, though they were very soft, cautious, and with long intervals between each. They stopped at his door. The lock which he had secured was tampered with—it gently shot back, the door opened—he sprang out of bed, and rushed towards the intruder, screaming out—"Parricide! monster! father-killer!"—They closed and struggled in the dim light of the setting moon.

"Father!" exclaimed Augustus, now rushing into the chamber—"father, *I* am—*here!*—oh, could you, could you think it!—Villain—my father!"—he tore Sam Geeson from the old man, who instantly fell on the floor, and now there was a new struggle. Geeson was powerfully strong, but young Augustus also possessed strength, the strength of activity; no man he had yet met could run or leap with him—he

twisted the 'prentice down—at the moment received a pistol ball in the flesh of the fore-arm—and would have been overpowered, in his turn, had not servants entered, and thoroughly secured Samuel for the county gaol.

At the noise of the shot, Lord Lintern recovered his presence of mind, and staggered, supported by a servant, to his son's side. His son, seated on a chair, was weeping. The old man knelt, and, by a light held to him, examined the wound. It bled, amply; he muttered to himself, and looked up into Augustus's face.

"'Tis nothing," said Augustus—"a flesh-wound merely—see"—He raised his arm, and moved and stirred it, in every direction.

"It must be bound up though, till the surgeon comes," answered Lord Lintern:—He got a handkerchief, and performed the office, himself, still muttering. He ordered a messenger to go for the surgeon, and every one to leave the room.

Again they were alone, father and son. The tears of Augustus still dropped on his father's hands.

"It is painful, to make you weep, so," said Lord Lintern.

"It? It, father, make me weep? No, no; but"—

"*I* have: I said *those words*," interrupted the old man; "but, I ask you to pardon me, my son, for saying them; I raved, out of my sleep; —and, Augustus, 'tis *I* have been mad, I believe—'tis *I* have been wrong — 'tis *I* have hated *you*"—

"And you do, still?"

"Why, see, my boy, see this"—pointing to the blood, and smiling—(he had been weeping) —smiling, piteously, up into Augustus's face —"here is your blood freely spilt for me, and you ask me *do* I, still?"

"Oh God!" Augustus gave way to a real crying fit—"Oh, God be thanked! I could have emptied my veins to have you say that!"—

Next morning they spoke confidentially together, and took a journey in consequence, together also.

On the road to the village, from Lord Lintern's house, Mr. Snow and his companion made arrangements for travelling, immediately. To occupy the time as well as possible, they separated in the village, Mr. Snow to have post-horses ready, Graves to make one or two hasty calls, near at hand.

Great was his brother Alexander's surprise, to see the barrister enter his tower, with a tin box under his arm.

"Wax, and a light, first, Lieutenant," said Graves, after greetings. They were supplied to him. He took out of his pocket a knot of professional tape, which he had purchased, on his way to the tower, coiled it round the important box, sealed it, and committed his treasure to the temporary charge of his brother, having shortly explained to him what it contained, and how it had got into his possession.

"The next thing is to make out the right owner," he continued—"and, for that reason, Alexander, I cannot stay a moment longer with you."

"You do not expect to find him in this latitude, I suppose, Dick?"—asked Alexander.

"No—but—I hope—between here and London,"—The barrister would not hint to a blockade Lieutenant,—though his own brother, Mutford's present situation.

"You are close, with me, Richard," resumed Alexander; "but, whatever you may know of poor Mutford, I know as much—and perhaps more, too."

His brother looked at him, as he would have done at a witness whom he longed to cross-examine.

"Harkee, Dick—If you really have a clue to him, don't neglect it a moment—I may miss some single letter or other of my duty, my responsibility, and all that, on this confounded service, in what I am going to say—yet I will tell you that the paltry custom-house, here, has him set—and that I am the very man commissioned to look after him, to-morrow night, or the next, at a certain hour and place."

Richard Graves looked petrified, so far as a barrister, even a young one, can.

"That would be disagreeable duty for you, indeed, Lieutenant: — we must only endeavour to save you from it: so, good b'ye."

He left the tower, and on his way back to the village, walking very fast, made a little soliloquy——"Sam Geeson? known to me, in story, though never yet, personally? No. I don't like Mutford's account of him. He shall have no confidence of mine. Let me see, then. Lilly White, himself? — The Farm-house, of which I have read, must be a good way off,— and I've no time for it. — Hold—that merry-hearted little fellow, at whose self and steeds, on paper, 'Polly Miss's,' and 'Harrit, Miss,' I have laughed, ere now —— yes, he must do:—his name?—his name? oh, I remember:" and to the dwelling of Mas'r Fox, our barrister inquired his way.

As it was winter, and few "visitors" remaining at the sea-side, Fox's fly rested under its shed, and Graves therefore found him at home. He was seated, in a remote corner of his house, (the counterpane, which at night made two apartments of it, being removed) upon

a shoe-maker's stool, mending his wife's shoe. Graves now thought Mutford an indifferent portrait-painter. No smiles, no levity marked Mas'r Fox's features, and his manner was *triste* enough. Graves looked closer, and began to comprehend, though only generally, and excuse Mutford. Adown and across his cheeks were certain red marks; one of his eyes feebly winked through a bed of blue and green contusion; his under lip seemed also to have suffered, some short time ago; and before him, though with the distance of the apartment between them, sat his tall, robust wife, her arms folded, and, at the moment Graves entered, her tones loud and expressive.—Our friend caught one sentence—a proverb—"Yes, *my* man; yes, as often as the pitcher goes to the well, 'tis cracked, at last."

Considerable was Mas'r Fox's joy even for the temporary call from his stool-of-repentance, occasioned by Graves's visit. He jumped up, in something like his former agility and briskness, and with an abhorrent twist—an effort to grin—on his displaced features, went out after the barrister, to speak a word with him in the street.

Graves stated himself to be a friend of a friend of his, Mr. Mutford, and he wanted to see Mr. Mutford on urgent business,—in fact, he had very good news to tell him.

"Yes, S—ir," assented Fox, so far.

"I know where he has gone," continued Graves; "I know he crossed over from the coast, to Boulogne, last night—but you must tell me what house or houses in Boulogne the friends of the Miss Molly usually put up at?"

"I be blessed"—began Fox, and, obviously to Graves, with a secret dread of a revenue officer in disguise, he continued by denying all knowledge of every thing he had heard our friend say.

Graves engaged to prove to him that he had nothing to fear from speaking out. He informed Fox that their mutual friend, Mutford, had, long ago, made him acquainted with the name and qualities of the fly-charioteer; and he went on with anecdotes of old times, until Mas'r Fox tittered, hideously, full assent, and finally whispered the information demanded at his hands.

In a few minutes afterwards, Graves and Mr. Snow were on the road out of the village,

though still close by the coast, going at the best rate of four English post-horses. Along with getting the postilions in readiness, Mr. Snow had looked over the newspapers, London and provincial, of the last four days, taken in by different friends of his, and congratulated himself upon ascertaining that, at a sea-port only about ten miles distance, a steam-boat would that day cross to Boulogne. He and his friend only feared they might be too late for it, and the postilions were urged to make haste. They were in time, however; and, at about half past one found themselves aboard, wind and tide in their favour, though the wind was high.

Sea, Sea, thou art no flatterer!—only catch, in a packet-boat, huddled together, specimens of every rank and character under the sun—the lord and his lady, and the wandering Savoyard and his nut-brown help-mate—or ex-king, and valet out of place—a London-mantua-maker, going for the fashions to Paris, and a Duchesse de Berry, going to give the fashions at Lulworth—a sighing lover, who abhors every thing unrefined, and his abstruse-brained neighbour who, after one look at his lack-a-daisical expression, thinks him an ass—

delicate beauty, and *brusque* ugliness—the poor little governessed girl in her first 'teen, and the tyrant at whom she trembles—the toddling infant, the iron-framed man, the white-haired sage—the dandy and the sloven — the poetical youth who loves thee, in verse, and the mercantile traveller who only crosses thee—the virtuous, the vicious—the man of the world, and its novice—these and more — only let them be yielded up to thee, when the cat-o'-nine-tails of a good south-wester—(that will do,) lashes thy back—and——providing them with land-stomachs for thee—thou wilt not, honest, honest Sea, spare one!—Even as in the cradle first, and in the grave at last,—they shall be equal unto thee,—ay and in the eyes, and in the ears, of one another! Thou wilt bring them all down, logical, and convincing, as well as impartial Sea, to one common level of human misery! Grovelling equals they shall be upon thy bosom of many undulations! Unceremonious, unclean, abominable and hateful, all in a row, or all in a heap, or at least, all within the space of a few planks, together!

For this, honest, honest Sea, art thou to be loved.

It was Graves's first trip from his island, and he suffered to excess: to such an excess, indeed, that, in the few intervals of anguish and despair, he permitted his unbrooking English head to get impatient; and then he laughed at himself for his absurdity.

However, he and the more patient Mr. Snow were, after escaping up the step-ladder, soon screamed at, and gesticulated at, and pulled about, by the most impudent jackals of the Boulogne hotels, old and young, junior waiters and *les commissionaires*—(oh, the grand names for things of our neighbours!)—and, in as short a time as possible, the friends parted, Mr. Snow engaging a cabriolet to take him out to Lady Ellen's present residence, about four miles from the town, and Graves bending his steps to the "hotel," preferred and loved, according to Mas'r Fox, by the well-wishers of the Miss Molly, during their occasional visits to Boulogne. The commissioner who conducted him thither,—when, to free himself of the crowd of bawling, scowling, declaiming fellows on the *quai*, or pier, he had roared out the hotel's name—"and be d——d to you all!"—spoke English, tolerably well, and assured him he

would find himself comfortable, inasmuch as it was "Englis huss, and Meesteres Smit" (Mrs. Smith)—"Englis 'oman."

Graves found it, in reality, a small house (for a hotel) in a mean street; and, when he entered it, dirty, noisy, vulgar. He sighed at the thought of Michael Mutford sitting down to eat or drink, or lying down to sleep, in such a place.

He passed through the open street-door, into a narrow passage, and then into the "caffy-room," heralded by his important commissioner. This room was nearly full of "capt'ns," and "mas'r mates," and perhaps men of other trades, from England, almost all seated to detached tables, and eating beefsteaks, or mutton-chops, or boiled or roast-beef, and drinking London porter, or "brandy an' 'ot-vater," just as if they had never left home.—Graves took a disengaged chair, at the wall, in the far end of the room, and looked earnestly from one to another of the company.—Michael Mutford was not among them.

Should he inquire if he was in the house? or had put up in it?—How make the inquiry?—Would Mutford have given his name, at the

bar of such a place? Would he even have given a feigned one, with the addition of "Captain of The Miss Molly?"—if not, what magic was to help Graves to that feigned name?

As he pondered a moment, inclined, at least, to take his chance of asking for "a Mr. Mutford" of Mrs. Smith, the landlady, a remarkable man entered the coffee-room, crying out, with a portentously hungry face—"Jane! Jane! the boiled beef!"—Graves gazed at him as if he had seen his like, before. The in-need, ponderous, poking-out figure, the long, swinging arms, the large-lipped, heavy, smiling mouth, the small twinkling, colourless eyes, the wax-white face, and the flax-white eye-lashes, eye-brows and hair, broke upon him as the renewal of, at least, an agreeable vision.

"I *have* communed with him before, as Coleridge might, in dreams"—thought Graves, while Jane, a smart, pert, though not tidy English girl, came in with the boiled beef, and setting it before this gentle apparition, said, "Lau, Sir, how you do go on a-holloring."

"Where's my capt'n, Jane?" asked the hungry one, cutting at the beef.

Jane believed he was out o' doors:—he had

certainly gone out about two hours ago, *she* knew.

"Now, Mutford, many praises to your graphic pen if I am right, this time!" continued Graves,—"do I, or do I not see before me your Mas'r mate of the fortunate Miss Molly? and has he not, even now made allusion to yourself?"—Whether right or wrong, Graves determined to keep his eye on the beef-eater, and, if Mutford should not appear, in some time, try to win his confidence.

But, till his dinner, at least, should be over, our friend gave up all thought of addressing him: meantime, he resolved to go out to the bar, which he had passed in his way to the coffee-room, and mention Mutford's name to the landlady.

Looking over the breast-high barrier between him and Mrs. Smith, he saw a woman of about fifty, of great bulk of carcase, wrapt in flannel, sitting on one chair, and resting a swollen and also flannel-bandaged leg on another. Her face was broad, vulgar, yet, with a certain expression of goody-ness upon it, and red as the highest-coloured brandy, mixed with claret, could make it. One might fancy that

she held her own French wines and *eau-de-vie*, and that they shone through her cheeks as through part of a transparent barrel. That she suffered under a subsiding of the gout, in the disguised foot, was hinted by her wincing, now and then, during a very energetic occupation in which Graves found her absorbed. Upon yet a third chair before her lay a half-cut, large, fat, and (Graves swore it by his nose) badly-cured ham; and with a prodigious knife, and its sister-fork, at this she still worked, abstracting slice after slice, while to Jane, who stood beside her, a plate in either hand, she said—

"There, my dear,—more fine ham for them —that's fifteen sous, Jane"—putting a portion on one of Jane's plates—"yes, my dear, finer ham than they'll get all the time they are on the road from Boulogne to the south of France —ay, or all the time they stop there, building, and plastering for the poor French—*poor* souls!—T'other plate, my dear,—that 's twelve sous and a half, Jane—Run up to the poor men, Jane, and run down again, quick, with the money, my dear."

"Miss's," said Jane, in a low voice, passing

her nostrils over the plates, "I'm blessed but I think they'll guess at this——"

"Well, and if they do, my dear?—as fine a ham as ever came out of Yorkshire—put 't in bit of paper, Jane, each lot by 'tself,—Poor men, they're in such a hurry! in from Dover by the morning boat, and off by the Diligence, so soon, poor souls! — they'll show folk how to build, and such like in France, *I* know;— There, my dear, go—that makes the thirteenth plate, Jane,—two owing for—" She was going on in her work; two or three men, whom Graves recognized as his late fellow-voyagers, passed in to her, by a door near where he stood, and each holding sovereigns, or English bank-notes in his hand, asked her where they could get them changed into French money?

"Changed—French-money? eh, my dear? give it to me — I'll get it done for you"—She snatched at the hand of the applicant nearest to her, forced the sovereigns out of his grasp, and when she had counted them into her ample lap, and then, after a plunge into her pocket, drawn up a number of five-franc pieces, and counted them back to the inexperienced English traveller—"Here, my dear," she resumed—"I'm always

as obliging as I can—'tis my way—Here, my dear—twenty-five francs, you know,—to every English pound—and so, there, and there, and there, my dear"—and the thankful man pocketed his twenty-five francs for every pound, while he might, at that time, have got within a few sous of twenty-six francs, had he gone to the bank, or rather had Mrs. Smith permitted him to go.

" Well, my dear?" she blustered on, all the time puffing hard, and, at intervals, cringing down, with an outstretched hand hovering over her enflannelled foot, at a civil distance—" Well, my dear, and can I oblige you, too?" accosting the second possessor of English money, and wheedling him within grappling distance, till she secured his wrist, and his money, also; " to be sure I will—there, my dear—let me have it"—And again she captured her prize; again gave her twenty-five francs for each pound; and so went on, successively, with the third individual.

" Well, my dear," she resumed, turning to Graves, at the bar—" and can I do any thing for you?"

No, Graves had no money to change, he

thanked her. He mentioned Mutford's name. She was quite sure no such gentleman was in the house—or had been lately—nay, as well as she could remember, ever. He returned to the coffee-room.

The white-man had not relaxed in his attacks upon the round of beef. Graves took a resolution which went against his tastes, though, to tell the truth, as the beef looked better than the ham, not much against his stomach. He craved permission to sit down at the same table with the white-man. His request was accorded, hospitably, and in a good-natured fuss; the well-known frequenter of Mrs. Smith's house, doing the honours to the stranger, such as "holloring" to Jane for a plate, a knife and fork, bread, more "wegetables," fresh mustard, and a pint — (he had first ordered a pot, but Graves moderated him) —of London porter. And then he put about two pounds and a half of beef, carrots, and greens, to begin with, on Graves's plate, drank his health, and welcome to France, and finally resumed his attentions to himself.

"Just landed, *I* know, Sir?" he said, his fat voice, peculiarly modulated by breaking its way

through a solid medium of half-masticated viands.

Graves looked round the room before he answered. All the other dinner-eaters had finished, and were gone about their lawful callings. He and his new acquaintance were the only persons in the apartment. Then he admitted that, indeed, he was a new arrival.

"And your first trip, Sir?" Graves again assented.

"And quite alone among the parleys, Sir?" —The gossiping impertinence which at another time he would have checked, Graves now indulged, answering with an attractive and impressive sigh, that he *was* quite alone—among strangers.

"I be blessed, Sir, but that be bad—not knowing their ways, and having business to do with them—that is, if you *have?*"

"Little absolute business," Graves said, "and yet, the advice of any good-natured person, acquainted with Boulogne, and its ways, would, doubtless, be of great assistance to him in the —the sad affair which had brought him to France;" and again Graves drew a deep sigh.

"Well, now, I be blessed——" and the white man went on to offer himself, with great good-

will, as a Mentor, in any supposable case, seeing that he felt himself quite at home, in Boulogne, from constant visits to it.

" Then, in fact," continued Graves, " I have been directed to this house as the place where I should certainly find a friend of mine who left the coast of England, last night, for Boulogne, and who will be in great danger—he, and all the new friends with whom he is at present connected—if he returns to England without hearing what I have to say to him."

The listener laid down his knife and fork, and while he drank a long draught of porter, looked with no expression of folly at the young barrister. Graves took little notice, but let him show his colours at his leisure.

" And *bayn't* he in the house, Sir?" at length demanded Farmer Bob.

" The landlady assures me he is not."

" Oh, Sir, for all that he may be, so many people come and go, and so many names keep buzzing in Miss's Smith's poor ears, and she not having the best of heads, in some matters —so that if you think fit to whisper your friend's name to me, Sir, p'raps I may've heard it, at the bar."

Graves did so. Farmer Bob looked assured

of disagrecable news, though he evidently struggled to show as little consciousness as was possible.

" Mutford? Mutford, Sir?" he resumed,—" now I *be* sure Miss's Smith be wrong; there *was* a gentleman of that name in the house, a few hours ago, *I* know;—and, most likely, he will come back to sleep here, too;—and s'pose, Sir, I should see him afore you, can I obleege you by giving him any message?"

" Yes—if you please," answered our friend—" tell him that one Lieutenant Graves has got a hint from the Custom-house, at a place he knows, to watch the Miss Molly to-night, and for some nights to come, at a place which he knows, also."

The habitual as well as natural self-command of Farmer Bob was all but staggered by this abrupt speech. Graves enjoyed the scarce-plausible air of innocence with which he answered—" Well, and I be blessed, but I will give your message;—one Lieutenant Grapes—or Graves, you say, Sir? and the Miss Molly, Sir?—I'll be sure and remember."

" Thank you; and pray add, that the friend who brings him that hint, has good news for

him as well as bad—good news in the shape of a letter from his sister, and a tin-box from Lord Lintern."

Again Farmer Bob promised not to forget; and Graves felt some comfort in the assurance that, although he might not be able to see Mutford, immediately, or as soon as his "Mas'r Mate," the Miss Molly would not put out very far from Boulogne for a few days at least; and thus a meeting with his poor friend seemed more probable than, an hour ago, it had done; meantime that he would be saved from exposure and danger by re-crossing to England in the continued character of a smuggling captain.

Graves resolved, further, to sit where he was, waiting the chance of Mutford's return to the house, as had been promised by his mate. Something made him change his mind.

A sottish, ill-faced, slow-pacing fellow, dressed in the last days of a neat-fitting dandy suit of clothes, came into the room, and, after interchanging a look of recognition with Farmer Bob, sat heavily on one chair, stretched out his leg upon a second, hung his arm over the back of a third, and said, in a lazy, surly tone, letting his head fall back, and shutting his eyes—"Capt'n

parted company, and wouldn't take no hail to come back; gone up into the country, no one don't know where; — rum chap, that, for a Capt'n; never liked him; thought him a fool; and so he be."

Graves listened attentively.

"Gone up the country, alone, Will Brown?" demanded the anxious "Mas'r Mate."

"Yes; or like it; no great difference;— Don't you remember the fool of a bit of a dandy as came here, this morning, to chatter with you and me for a passage to England, on the sly, telling a fool's story of how he killed a French 'un at Paris, and was afeard to go aboard the steamers?"

"Yes, Will, I remember."

"Very well; pointed him out, I did, to our new Mas'r Capt'n to-day; and away he flies from my side, that min't; and I loses sight of him; and, half-an-hour after, I sees him chasing that 'ere young 'un, sometimes walking fast, sometimes running, the two together, only the young 'un a good way a-head; and so, as I said, they be gone up the country, two fools alike."

"Which road?" asked Farmer Bob, with

some misgivings of the constancy of the Captain of the Miss Molly,—"The road to Paris?"

"No; I axed, and a party told me, The road to St. Om'r."

Scarce had he said these words when Graves left the coffee-room, suddenly and hastily.

And he, also, asked his way to the St. Omer's road, and—Mas'r Brown would have said,—There was now a third fool added to the other two.

Certain painful misgivings possessed Graves's mind. He identified, to himself, the individual in pursuit of whom Mutford had parted company with the reputable Mas'r Brown; and though the hope of meeting Mutford, upon a strange road, in a strange country, an hour after night-fall, seemed enough vague, still Graves *did* set out from Boulogne, praying that he might, by some good chance, be the means of hindering his friend from, perhaps—doing a murder.

MEANTIME Mr. Snow gained the temporary abode of his young friend, Lady Ellen Allan.

Their meeting, in the presence of her good protectors, was joyful to both. Lady Ellen, as a daughter might have done, wept some tears upon his shoulder; she *was* his child in pure esteem and affection, and he was loved by her, as, alas, she could not at present love her own father.

They sat down to dinner. Mr. Snow told his good news. The act of justice done by Lord Lintern towards the Mutfords; the strong hope, the almost certainty, of his becoming reconciled to his elder son; and, lastly, as dinner was ended, he congratulated her upon an invitation from her father, to return to his care and protection—and handed her her father's letter, in testimony of his statement.

With sparkling though streaming eyes, Lady Ellen broke the seal of the letter. It produced upon her a different effect from what her friend had anticipated. After reading its last lines, a slight but painful shriek escaped her, it fell from her hands, and she would have fallen from her chair, but that Mr. Snow, who sat next to her, supported her.

When restored, she put her hands to her face and wept bitterly. She was getting faint, again, notwithstanding this relief. Mr. Snow recommended her, as the evening was mild and dry — though a winter evening — with an unclouded moon, to wrap herself up, and pass out, with the help of his arm, into the garden.

She complied, eagerly; she seemed anxious to be alone with him. And the moment they were alone, she asked if he knew all the contents of the letter she had received?

"I thought I did, my dear, from the circumstances under which I got it," he answered —"I could imagine that it contained nothing but your father's invitation to return home to him; if it does not contain *that*———"

"It does, Sir," she resumed, as the good

man paused, almost in indignation—" it does, and I am thankful and grateful that it does:—but, oh, dear Mr. Snow, it contains more! Just one line more! and that one more is enough, I fear, to destroy my peace of mind for ever!" She wept again.

Her friend was silent, so far as regarded making any request to learn her secret, if secret she chose it to be. He only tried, in soothing and holy words, to make her feel that, whatever afflicted her, she ought not to doom herself, in this fair world, in her early youth, and with a heart to love the author of all that is fair and good, to a life of unjoyous regrets and recollections.

" Oh, Sir," she said, " let me tell you, what I have to tell you, and then you will judge for me, and advise me. A wretched, wretched story it is, Mr. Snow, and, some parts of it, as surprising, almost as incredible, as the whole is wretched; but that is nothing; we live in a strange world, I believe, although a fair one, where chances do come about—sudden meetings of those who think themselves widely separated, and other things—which would read unplausible in fiction.

"About the very time that my excellent friends brought me here, the château next to us,—and only a field off—you can see its chimneys over the trees of this garden—and outside the fence of the shrubbery we walk in, are its pleasure-grounds,—about that very time, if not the very day, another English family took that château. They consisted only of a lady and a gentleman, with their servants. We soon heard some tittle-tattle about them; you cannot curb the tongues of your attendants, Sir, and I believe, those of French girls and women, least of all. Our neighbours were represented as remarkable people. The lady, we learned, was young, beautiful, fashionable, commanding—haughty, I supposed; the gentleman more than double her age, plain, affable, and unattractive. It was said, next, that she was "milady," and he only Monsieur; next that he called her by one name, and she him by another; next—that—that—they could not be married, for they always had separate chambers, widely apart; and yet that they had been surprised in endearments together—at least the gentleman had seemed so peculiarly attentive to the lady, that it was difficult to suppose them father and daugh-

ter, or brother and sister, or, in fact, related to one another in the ordinary bonds of family relationship, through any of its modifications. And the last and most remarkable thing we heard of them was, that, for the last few days, before to-day, the lady repulsed all the gentleman's attentions: avoided him through the house, and in the gardens and pleasure-grounds; and, whenever they met, spoke to him in high tones, which he resented.

"Now, dear Sir, attend, and pity me. This day, I was walking in this very little shrubbery; of a sudden, the voices of a man and a woman, at some distance, in the grounds of yonder château, came on my ears; I stopped, electrified, for the man pronounced the Christian name of my second-elder sister, with her title; and some of the lady's tones, though I could not distinguish her words, thrilled through me. I was standing at the other end of this path—down there—a spot which I now dread to approach. If you could conveniently observe it, you would find that—owing to both châteaux having been a long time unlet, while both belong to the same proprietor—the fence, originally dividing the premises from each other, has

been suffered to go to decay in that place, so that there is egress from our garden to our neighbour's pleasure-grounds. Well, Sir, as I stood, unable to move on, the voices grew louder, as if coming nearer to me; then, they suddenly ceased, after the lady had spoken in a very peremptory cadence; then I heard footsteps; and before I could turn aside, hastily stepping through the breach in the fence, her fine figure erect, her brows knit, her eyes flashing, and her face red as vermilion, my sister Anna stood within a few paces of me.

"Words of astonishment escaped us both, and, after an instant's pause, 'Ellen!' she said, '*you* here? and with whom have you come here?'

"I answered her in the simple truth, and demanded in my turn, for my fears were great, from all I had heard and observed, 'and you, Anna, you my dear sister, though you will not let me call you so—with whom have *you* come to France?'

"'Fear nothing on my account,' she answered, 'and so much I will say, though I do not recognize the right of a younger sister—at least one so childishly young as you are—to question

in that tone, and with that silly look, the actions or the situation of an elder sister.'

"'Anna, I implore you!' I said, 'do, do answer me; you will kill me if you do not!'

"'Have you lately heard from England, Ellen?—to be sure you have—or did you hear nothing before you left, for France?'

"'Nothing of you—not a word, Anna!—but oh, do,—I beseech you again——'

"'Foolish girl! what troubles you?' she interrupted: 'Since you must have your pathetic, scenic appeal disposed of, I do answer you—I am with my husband.'

"'Married, Anna! and according to Lord Lintern's choice?'

"'No,' she replied smiling, 'I have not, in this one step, been so dutiful as you have been in all that you ever did before his Lordship's eyes.'

"'Do not sneer at me, Anna:—may I come and see you?'"

"'Ellen!' was her answer—'by our father's command, and, indeed, our own different characters and pursuits, we have hitherto stood aloof, since you were a child, almost—why should we fall in love with one another, now,

of a sudden?—Besides, my husband will see none of my family:—he thinks you have all ill-treated him.'

"'All, Anna? I, among the number? I, who, to this moment, do not know his name? But no matter—let me see you, Anna—or will you come to see me?—'tis a short distance from one house to the other.'

"'Why are you so very anxious that we should patch up an old indifference, Ellen? What is your motive—your object?'

"'Will you not let me love you, Anna? and in my wish to love you, have I not motive enough for what I ask?'

"'Tut, tut, child;—child as you are,—'tis not by such a rule the world's youngest daughters act.'

"'Perhaps I *have* another motive."

"'Ay; so I thought. Pray tell it, at once.'

"'I fear, Anna—I fear you are not happy.'

"'Ellen,' she answered, her air and features resuming something of the expression they had worn when she broke through the dilapidated fence,—'I do not permit this:—I have made a choice, and—for the present, at least—or, as long

as I like, *will* be content with it; nor shall you, nor any other human being, pretend to dub me unhappy, and come oppressing me with condolence: fare you well; as we have lived, Ellen, let us live; indeed, you know, we cannot live friends, if we become more intimate; you were always *too good* for *me*—don't you remember?"

"And while speaking those unkind words, Mr. Snow, she turned away again, smiling, and passed into her own grounds; no clasping of hands, no sister's kiss having marked our unexpected meeting, or our wretched parting."

"Afflicting, indeed, my dear," said Mr. Snow, "most afflicting to you for many reasons: that your sister should have married without her father's approval—"

"Oh, good Sir, good Sir!" interrupted Lady Ellen, her tears flowing afresh.

"That her own independent choice should not bring her happiness; and, worst of all, to you, that she still rejects your offer of affection, and will not allow you to contribute to her peace of mind."

"Mr. Snow—how can the circumstances have escaped you? they—such as they, fly quick

enough, abroad—But, Mr. Snow, you have not named the strongest reason why I should be afflicted—humbled and oppressed to the earth—but my father's letter —— hush! — does not some one walk softly outside this fence?"

Mr. Snow said he had heard no footsteps, both looked and listened, but it seemed that Lady Ellen had mistaken. She continued.

"My father's letter, Sir! It supplies the reason you have missed! It informs me—in one line as I have said—it informs me——oh, dear Sir, the suspicions of the servants are correct—! oh, Mr. Snow, they only did not suspect enough!"

"My dear child! Lady Anna not married?—your father must have mistaken—be assured that such is the case."

"Such cannot be the case, Sir! My sister has left England with the husband of another woman."

Mr. Snow could make no reply, no observation. Exclamations alone escaped him, and all his care was directed to calm the agony of grief to which his young friend now abandoned herself.

"Your advice, dear Sir," she said, as soon as

she could make herself intelligible — "your opinion—your counsel—can any thing be done? what am I to do?"

"If any human being can do any thing, it is you," he answered.

"Then, Sir, direct me—think and speak for me."

"No, dear Lady Ellen, no. I will not do you an injustice. I will not presume to deprive you of the happiness of thinking, speaking, nay, and acting, too, for yourself. Compose yourself for a moment—form your own resolution—that is, in the presence of reason, listen to your heart, and follow its least whispers."

"Thanks, Sir, thanks," she took his hand—"I will not wrong *you*, by supposing you can flatter me; and so—" She dried her tears, was silent, then resumed.

"'Tis very plain before me, I think; I am sure it is. She repents already her hasty step. Perhaps, taking all things, gossipings, and my own observations into account—that step has not involved her so—so—"

"I agree—has not involved her, in reality, so deeply, so lamentably, as we might fear:—I agree," interrupted Mr. Snow.

"But, whether it has or not, ought to be nothing to me, Mr. Snow—nothing, I mean, in the course my love of my sister commands me to take,—yes, indeed, dear Sir, my love of poor Anna,—for I have never, never ceased to feel a sister's affection towards her: and so, this is what I will do. I will go early to-morrow morning, if not to-night, into her house; I will ask to see her; I will gain her presence, if they refuse to let me see her; I will ask her to come home with *me*;—I will put my arms round her neck—I will kiss her lips—I will kneel down, weeping, at her feet—" the feelings of the young speaker again broke up the studied firmness of her voice—"I will beseech her, in the name of our poor mother, whose face she remembers, though I have never seen it—in the name of our poor father, too, whose old age she and I may yet help to cheer, and—ay—and make honourable; I will promise to love her better than any living creature ever loved her, if she *does* promise to come home with me; I will promise to be attentive and respectful to her, as a younger sister ought, to an elder sister—I will speak to her, and kneel to her, till she gets up and gives me her hand, and says,

'Come!'—for, surely, surely, I shall prevail, dear Sir! she cannot have—she *has not* the heart to spurn me!"

"She will not, my dear child, she will not," said Mr. Snow, touching reverently with his reverend lips the fair young hand he held, while Lady Ellen sobbed on his shoulder.—Both started, and stood mute and still, looking at one another, as other sobs reached them, from the place where Lady Ellen had before thought she heard a listener. Directly, steps, no longer disguised, passed at the other side of the fence: their eyes turned to the breach in it, of which Lady Ellen had spoken; her sister appeared, and advanced to them.

"No, Ellen, she will not," said Lady Anna, before they met—"your sister will not spurn you: she *does* offer you her hand· she *does* say to you 'Come.'"

After greetings, such as they had never before interchanged, Lady Anna continued.

"I have been listening to you, Ellen, for some time; and though I became an eavesdropper after you had begun to speak, enough reached my ears to produce this effect. Let me explain a few things to you. Till the present hour, I never believed, never was asked

or led to believe, that one human being could bear disinterested regard for another. I occasionally read of such things, in pretty tales, or yawned over them, in a box at the theatre, or the opera, but they partook, in my mind, of the character of the professed fiction of the book, or of the artificial show of the stage. In the realities of life — of the life I led, since our mother's death—I never saw an instance of—*your heart*, Ellen; all those around me, either passed the question silently or scoffingly, or said boldly, there was no such thing. I did as they did, silently, scoffingly, or boldly. They treated me according to their theory: and according to it, I treated them. According to it, I treated you, also. You began to listen to your heart, as soon as you began to grow out of childhood—*now* I know such was the case; but *then*, I did not understand you, Ellen; and, taken together with your extreme youth, I set you down as a little prim visionary, giving herself airs upon an egotistical notion of her own imaginary—goodness. My father's measures, when you leagued with Augustus, kept us asunder; I had few or no opportunities to correct my error; I continued in it.

"Now it is seen, and now it is corrected. I

have heard you, I say, speaking of me. Can I hesitate to believe that there is such a thing as heart—as pure, simple, noble, God-like affection on earth, *after* having heard you, Ellen? —I tell you, my sister, that I listened to you, until the new, the almost fainting sensation of my own heart, touched, opened, and gushing, brought me to my knees—my haughty knees, and made me weep with you. I questioned your motives, to-day—can *I*, at present? You knew not I was within hearing; you had been treated ill by me — repulsed; — calling me to your side, and to your love, gains you no worldly advantage; on the contrary, you believe and fear it may gain you the world's censure——."

"Dear Anna, not a word of that!" interrupted Lady Ellen. Mr. Snow was turning off towards the house.

"Stay, Sir," resumed Lady Anna,—"I have heard you, also, this evening; I have heard *of* you, Sir, before this evening; I know you to be the friend of my sister; her adviser—her tutor——."

"Nay, nay, dear lady Anna," said Mr. Snow; "her friend I am proud and delighted

to be called: but she has had a fitter and a mightier tutor."

"Well, Sir, allow me to say, only, that, during any conversation between her and me, you cannot be an intruder; that, on the contrary, you have a right, if not a duty, to remain here till I speak a few words more, and then lead Ellen and me into *her* house, together."

Mr. Snow, smiling his most charming of all smiles, bowed, and stood still.

"Let me, then, be brief, dearest Ellen. What you have charitably and kindly conjectured of the degree of my guilt, is true. I can prove it, to demonstration, in the eyes of the world. I love not — I loved not — strange, even odious as the admission sounds — I love and loved not the man in whose company — although not alone—I have left England. You can imagine the kind of existence I have been leading, when I tell you, that revenge upon his vain and imperious wife was the sole momentary impulse to my as vain and worse than imperious step. The lady hated me; and owing to her interference, I lost the attentions of a man who—if I did not *love him*, either—

could have given me high rank and sway in the world. Her whispers detached him from me for ever. I saw him married to another. Grief, rage, humiliation, and, as I have said, revenge possessed me. My *friend's* husband, in whose house I was, had often been gallant to me. He continued his politeness. I swore I would grieve her heart! I encouraged him. He lost his senses — proposed to me a journey from England — I assented—leaving a letter for her which I knew she would remember. Thus guilty I have been. No farther. As I have told you, I can demonstrate the fact. And now———."

Men's voices, and other quickly-succeeding incidents interrupted the speaker, and threw her and her sister and Mr. Snow into great agitation. It is necessary to explain at some length.

THE captivating pigeon-winger is authority, that a man in a cloak and a hairy-cap, seemed to have scared away from the "sport for ladies," Lord Acorn's "new arrival from Paris."

She was right. Lord Acorn's young protegé did not at all like the regards and the features of the observant stranger, on the sands. Along with his objection to be so taken notice of at present, by any one, a vague notion of having before seen that half muffled face, under disagreeable circumstances, passed across his mind. At a favourable opportunity, he left his sporting friends, and hastened into the town.

Looking behind him, in the first street he gained, he congratulated himself. Cloak-and-hairy-cap was not in view. He continued his rapid walk, and stood at the door of Lord Acorn's house, preparing to ring, and resolved

to await, under its roof, the return of his friend from the sands.

He did ring; and, at that instant, the stranger caught his eye, crossing rapidly, from the other side of the street. Not waiting to have the door opened, he turned shortly away, and, doubling up and down other streets, not known to him, increased his former speed almost to a run.

He emerged into the main street of the new-town, and ascended it—for it is an ascent, and a steep one, too. More than once he again looked behind. He could not distinguish his follower; but it grew a little duskish, and he was not quite satisfied. He passed under the gate leading into the high town. A long, heavily laden waggon had just entered it before him, moving slowly; and, with many others, he was obliged to stand close against the wall of the arched passage, to allow it to clear the gate. Here it was almost perfect darkness. The hinder wheels of the waggon were turning lazily by him. Through their spokes, he looked towards the opposite wall of the arch-way, and there, with another group who were also compelled to stand still, he thought he could make

out, vaguely, the figure of the person he did not wish so near him.

He did not look again. The moment the way was open, he sprang on, up the first narrow and sombre street of the high-town. He came to one of the flights of steps leading up to the ramparts, ascended them, and unmindful of the glorious, half moon-lit panorama of sea and land, harbour, town, river, hill and valley, around him, only looked close for some place of concealment. None appeared: and at the noise of another person ascending the steps he had just come up, he ran along the ramparts.

He arrived at the top of a second flight of steps. Without a plan, and only urged on by the instinct of avoiding supposed danger, he was about to descend them. Again he heard some one mounting up, against him, and thinking but of one individual, in that solitary place, his mind changed, and he hurried back the way he had come.

He regained, in fact, the first steps which had led him to the top of the ramparts. He stopped, and bent his head to listen; all was silent. He glanced back. No one appeared following him. He descended, stealthily paus-

ing on every step; was in the street; and encountered the stranger so closely that they almost touched. He just observed that a sign was made to him, but not anxious to answer it, raced with all his speed through the high-town, across its old picturesque place, and onward, till he shot through its gate, its suburb, and came to where two broad roads branched off at an acute angle. One, he knew, led towards Calais; the other inland, to St. Omer's; he preferred and took the latter.

Unused to much bodily exertion, on foot, he felt some fatigue in continuing his way against the long, though not abrupt hill over which the road at first wound—or rather went, as straightforward as it could. Though a high-road, too, he found it kept in worse repair than, perhaps, the worst by-road in England; and now treading ankle-deep in mud, and now stumbling into a rut, was not the best manner of making progress — though, at every fault, he gratified himself by cursing the French, and France, and saying what he had heard others say, "that they were a century behind *us*, in every thing." To add to his satisfaction, night began to set in, in earnest, only relieved by a

full, unobscured moon, about which he had never been in the habit of caring a farthing.

It had been market-day at Boulogne, and carts, waggons, and donkey-mounted women and girls passed him in great numbers, returning to their several villages, within from three to twelve miles of the town. Of the women, many were old, withered, and, in their knitted worsted jackets and close caps without borders, uninviting. Of the girls, in their caps with wide edgings to them, smart gowns, and little cloaks of stamped cotton, a sufficiency were pretty. All, young and old, gabbled to one another, their hearts light after disposing to advantage of their eggs, butter, poultry, and other country produce, at the market; and their good-humour and flippancy displeased our fugitive, chiefly because he did not know French well enough to understand all they said. When they laughed, he thought it impertinent; and once, when—heaven knows if in reference to him—they spoke of "*Les Anglois*," and laughed more merrily than ever, he d——d them, and assured himself that the French people, of every class, were the most presuming and self-satisfied people in the world.

He gained the top of the hill he had been ascending. He glanced adown it. No figure like that which he was thinking of most, challenged his eye. At least, he hoped and believed not; but, on account of the light and shade of the moon, could not again feel certain.

Proportioned to the acclivity he had mastered, there was a declivity of considerable sweep before him. He ran down this—continued along very little of a level road, and encountered a second long hill. His inclination to ascend it began to waver; and, as a waggon passed him, hooped over, and covered with some coarse awning, he took a happy thought. He asked the man who followed the waggon, with a whip in his hand, a pipe in his mouth, a white night-cap, with a fine tassel on his head, and a great black beard, of some days' growth, together with a good deal of manly and—to tell the truth—self-satisfied expression on his face, to allow him to ride. The man consented, and he got under the awning, and was helped, at his own request, — stepping with some difficulty, from ledge to ledge of the bottom of the waggon, to its far end, by men, women, girls and boys, who occupied it before him,

and who, once more to his abhorrence, were merry and loquacious among themselves. And there, almost quite in the dark, for the rude covering was open at but one end, he tried to adjust himself, as well as he could, sitting on a ledge, and allowing, perforce, his legs to dangle through the space between it and another. However, he wished himself, in a qualified manner, joy of his situation. Now he was completely hid from the observation of any person on the road, and would be, till his temporary carriage should arrive at its destination, where he proposed to abide for the night, if not longer. And before he had crept into his convenient obscurity, he assured himself he had not been remarked by his pursuer.

He began to call back his presence of mind, and his sagacity of a certain description. It occurred to him, for the first time, as very strange, that an officer of justice, of any description, should follow him, singly, out of Boulogne, when, upon two occasions, at least, he could have stretched out his hand, and arrested him in Boulogne. Besides, a single man, against a single man, ran more risk of failing in his mission, on the high way, in the country,

than he could have done in the streets of a town, where, necessarily, he must have been backed by the local administrators of law and of justice.

'Twas very odd. Was his shadow an officer of justice at all? True—there were some good reasons why he should have supposed so, in the first instance—but, upon mature consideration of circumstances, since experienced—what or who was he?—

The cowardice lurking in the bottom of his heart sickened at supposing him to be the honourable and ruined individual himself whose legal agent alone he had at first trembled at. But, with a happy sigh, he soon rid himself of that great fear. It was almost broad daylight when he of the cloak and cap originally manifested himself on the sands, and though his features were not then distinctly displayed, the waggon-traveller must have recognised his former friend, if the intruder had been he. Besides, one was a remarkably tall man—the other hardly of the middle stature. So far he grew comfortable.

Still there remained a curious question. At the first glance at the stranger, he thought he

had seen him before; and now he could not divest himself of the impression. Where? was he the very *gend'arme* from whom he had escaped—by a good bribe, at Paris? That very man in disguise now urged to pursue him by another bribe?—But, again, came the rational case before considered. If it was he, or any friend of French law, why did he suffer him to escape from the streets of Boulogne, to hunt him—Heaven knows whither, but just according to the waggon and its owner—into the lonesome country?"

He grew nervous and wavering, once more. A private vengeance, of some kind or other, seemed to threaten him. He called back the passages of his life from which might spring such an event—and though he could not boast many years, he found himself able to pause and reason upon more than one or two plausible cases. He recollected that, a few months ago, in the north of England, a brother had sworn to revenge upon him the ruin of a sister. He had once struck down, and trampled upon a French valet, of less bodily strength than he; pledged his honour, before a magistrate, to the falsehood of the man's accusation, and defeated

him; but, at parting, the French valet had whispered one hissing word in his ear, which, at the time, scared him. These and other things passed through his mind; did he feel penitent as well as frightened, during the precious self-examination? — His last supposition was the worst of all—Augustus! or an agent of Augustus!—Augustus, his furious, if not mad brother!

It was strange he never thought of Mutford, even slightly, or for a moment.

His reveries were interrupted by the waggon stopping. He became a little observant. The majority of his fellow-travellers got down on the road, wishing their friend, the waggoner, "good night," and thanking him for their ride in his vehicle; they were at home, or nearly so. No one remained in the waggon but a sprightly girl and a little boy, the daughter and the son, as appeared afterwards, of its proprietor. They assisted their father to get a large hamper out upon the road, and deliver it to the servants of an English family, the avenue to whose château was near at hand. All this our young fugitive learned by listening, in the far end of the waggon, for he could see no person on the road,

or, at least, only very indistinctly. The servants went away with their load, and the waggoner came to ask Monsieur if he did not mean to get down?

"No," he was answered, "I will sit here, if you please, till you arrive at your own house."

"My own house!" repeated the man, "to do that, I have to turn off the main road, here, upon a by-road, for a league or more."

"Very well, go on."

"I have come out of my way to deliver that hamper," he continued.

"No matter, I am going with you."

"And whither *was* Monsieur going?"

"With you, I tell you, till you stop."

"*C'est drole, ça*," observed the waggoner.

"There—" stretching forward to give him a five-franc piece—"what is it now?"

"*C'est tres bien, à present, Monsieur*—" and having assisted his son and daughter to re-enter beneath the covered hoops of the waggon, he cracked his whip, and yelled to his beasts in the most diabolical manner and tone of his district.

Upon a by-road the waggon certainly turned. This fact became confirmed to the young

gentleman inside, not only by the scraping of boughs and bushes against its awning, but by the tenfold jolting and shaking he underwent. Fool as he was, he had, in his heart, called the main-road the worst that could be travelled over; it was velvet to the road he now explored, in darkness, in torture, and at the rate of about two miles an hour. Hill and hollow, holes, little pits, ruts, great stones, were not its sole attributes. The horses trod to their knees, and the huge wheels rolled to their axles, in the accumulated and ever-disturbed though never-removed mire of, doubtless, centuries—for *la belle* France is an old country.

Certain habits of the youthful dandy's mind disposed him, notwithstanding the not peaceful state of his nerves, to try and break up the anguish his body was enduring, by a chat with his female fellow-traveller. She sat at the far end of the long waggon, and, he had remarked, seemed, from the outset, to take her journey as pure enjoyment, allowing her legs and feet to swing at their leisure over the last ledge of her father's great vehicle, and chattering or laughing with her little brother, or singing aloud to herself. It did not seem

prudent to approach her, for two reasons: first, because his person would be exposed, in changing his place; secondly, because in the endeavour to pass down to her, he might very probably slip between the ledges of the waggon and break his legs or his thighs. He was therefore about to ask her to come a little nearer to him, when he observed that she seemed pre-engaged. A man's voice, and a young man's too, wished her and her father good night, and then went on to say pleasant things to her, to which, with the readiness of French peasant girls, she answered as became her. Our listener grew very attentive, as he caught some tones of that voice. Had he ever heard them, before?—Some of his recent fears returned, in their strength. Was the speaker Frenchman or Englishman? The fluency and ease of his language suggested the former notion; and, again, some of his accents the latter.

Still the encaged young gentleman listened. The conversation of the new comer was gay, but, it struck his unseen and unseeing observer, not vulgar. A gentleman, in fact, might so address himself to a merry country girl, in France, and so keep up a dialogue with her.

And if he was a gentleman, what brought him there? Following that waggon, at such a time of night, a-foot, on such an abominable road?—The soliloquist looked, cautiously, to the opening of the waggon. Nothing appeared in view, from the road, but the night-capped head of its master.

Words interchanged between the brother and sister at length informed him that their home was at hand. Before this, he had heard the stranger wish the girl and her father good night. That greatly relieved him. He now felt as great consolation that his journey was ended, and new and almost perfect hopes of having eluded the inquisitive person at Boulogne, and of being at length quite removed from observation, in a retired village or hamlet, off a main road. The girl and her brother got down. The honest waggoner again asked him if he also would not alight? He stept cautiously along the bottom of the vehicle, and, leaning on the arm which was civilly presented to him, at its opening, jumped upon the road. In the act of doing so, the arm intertwined itself with his, and grasped him tight. He stood upright, looked at his supporter, and saw the person he had come so far to avoid.

"You have led me a good way, to settle your own business, Sir," said the man; "however, I allow you your own precautions, situated as you are."

"What business? what do you mean?" demanded the complimented party.

"Surely you remember having made inquiries, to-day, about crossing over to England, in a private boat?"

"No—you mistake me for some other person."

"Oh, come Sir, come: you've no need to be so cautious with me; 'tis you that mistake, at present; you did, indeed, Sir, make those inquiries; you offered, too, a round sum for your passage, if things should be prudently managed, and you landed safe; and the people with whom you spoke told you they could not strike a bargain with you till they should see the tight little boat's Captain, first; and I am he, Sir, at your service."

"Supposing all this to be true,—supposing you and me to be really the persons you speak of—what is your reason for following me out of Boulogne, this evening? why could you not come to me in the town?"

"And, on my faith and conscience, Sir, I

am quite astonished at your questions. In the first place, I *did* try to make you out, in Boulogne, when my people mentioned that you had called; and I *did* succeed in having you pointed out to me, on the sands; and I *did* come up to you, there, and would have saluted you, but that you plainly made me a sign, as I thought, to follow you; and, certainly, you cannot deny that I *have* obeyed you, as I believed you wished it to be; though, indeed, I wondered, more than once, on the way from Boulogne to this place, that you seemed so much afraid of any one seeing us join each other, and settle our little business together: however, as I 've said, I gave you your own way, partly out of respect to your troubles, partly out of respect to the very handsome offer you make for a passage in my little boat."

"This is very strange," said the young gentleman, looking about him, in the vague thought of calling upon the aid of the waggoner, or of some other villagers, in case of need; for, whether it was the smuggling captain's manner, or that he could not quite suppress the indirect evidences of a hidden purpose, the person whose arm he still held tight, thought there was a

dangerous sneer in his tones, although his words seemed plain enough. His features were not sufficiently exposed to declare any thing.

The doubter looked around. But he and his companion stood quite alone. The waggoner, his son and daughter, and even the waggon and its strong horses had disappeared, and no other persons were visible.

They were upon the beginning of a descent of the by-road, into a hamlet; a few mud-built and thatched cottages appeared immediately at either hand; over those, ploughed grounds sloped upward, and, to one side, were topped in the distance by a ridge of craggy crested hills, of which the features were sufficiently brought out by the brilliant moon, as also those of a rude fort, and a low line of fortifications, crowning part of their summit. Behind the strangers swelled the last high ground, over which the waggon had come, shuting out every other object in that direction. So far, the night-scene was bleak and wild enough. Straight before them, looking down the descent on which they stood, it was relieved. They glanced along the main, if not only street of the little village; and the lights shining

through the casements of its picturesque—in some instances—grotesque houses and cottages, at both sides of the road, were cheering; and the calm moonshine sleeping on two sides of the quadrangular spire of its little church, and upon the tombstones of the church's burying-ground, was, although solemn, pleasing.

"Let us speak more, down in the village," continued the younger stranger.

"Hush!" whispered his companion, as the bell in the church spire began to toll, slowly. He seemed strangely affected by its sudden clang, which the silent country around increased into a kind of booming echo—"What can cause this?" he continued—"But see—"

He pointed with his disengaged hand, first to the doors of the churchyard and of the church, and then down the village street; the former were at the moment opened, by a man and a boy, each bearing a lantern; and up the street came two women, carrying between them a little, little coffin, and followed by a third female, and a young man.

"Come, then—come down to the village," continued the smuggling captain; and he walked his companion hastily, from the top of the

descent, some emotion within him, apparently increasing.

They reached the open door of the churchyard, and there stood still. The two women who bore the little coffin were old; the third woman was young: none of them seemed much affected; the young man was the most so of the scanty funeral train; and yet not much so.

"The mother cannot be here," thought the Smuggler, and he ventured to ask some questions of one of the old women. He was informed that the infant about to be buried had been almost still-born — gasping, however, a few minutes after its birth, to allow of its receiving the rites of baptism, and in consequence something like formal interment in consecrated ground; that its mother insisted, though a poor woman, on having it buried by the priest, accordingly, although, to avoid all display for such a little one, the ceremony had been deferred till night.

"And is this the father?" continued the Smuggler, pointing to the young man; he was answered, yes;—"He does not seem much afflicted," he added.

"Ah, but, Sir," answered the old nurse,

" he has others, that have been spared to him, and his poor woman is out of danger, too; and as for this poor little thing, he knows it is a little angel in Heaven, now."

The Smuggler smiled; but at the same time he drew in his under-lip, and turned a step aside.

The guardians of the little corpse seemed to have been waiting, according to usage, the coming of the priest to the door of the church-yard. He now appeared, emerging through the door of the church, followed by his *enfant de prêtre.* He was a tall, and very old man; his teeth were gone; he stooped in the shoulders; his perfectly white hair flowed far down his back, vividly expressed by the contrast of the black stole upon which it fell, and the black conical cap which he wore barely on the top of his head: and yet he was a hale and vigorous old man; his dark eyes had the strength of middle age, his step was quick and firm; and his air expressed that mixture of courtly consequence, religious decorum, and—we must add —rustic briskness, which his early education, perhaps his early associations, his sincere conviction and the bustling and sometimes brawl-

ing habits of the country parish-priest into which he had settled, might be supposed to present, in a curious compound, together.

All this the Smuggler noted as he came near, passing out of the shadow of the porch of the church into the moonlit path of the little burying-ground; and then his white hair, his fine features, and his waving white surplice, received upon them a fit splendour.

He stood before the group who required his offices. They saluted him: he stretched forth his right hand, and passed it over them. He motioned to have the little coffin again taken up;—it had lain at the door; then, once more facing to the church, he began to read in Latin, his boy responding to him.

The Smuggling Captain drew his companion with him, after the little procession. It passed directly into the church. So did they. The old priest walked up to the altar, and there continued his prayers. The old women put the coffin on a chair, and now added to its former plain covering of white, a little pall, white also, but tastefully—according to village taste—embroidered with leaves of laurel, and other evergreens, and with every flower, wild and culti-

vated, afforded by the late season. They knelt, as so did the young female and the father. The Smuggler, letting go the arm he had held till that moment, followed their example. His companion looked at him with astonishment. Heavy grief was in his face; his eyes could not keep in their tears. All this while the bell tolled in the steeple over their heads.

The prayers at the altar were done. The priest came to the coffin, and made over it the sign of the cross. Then he led the way into the churchyard, and with uncovered head, began the sublime "From the depths I have cried unto Thee!"—And still, the Smuggler and his companion, whom he had again linked, followed the little funeral train.

All was over. The grave was closed; the last words were said; the priest and the people were gone; but the Smuggling Captain remained standing by that small grave. His unaccountable emotions seemed to overmaster him, in the observation of the only person who now watched him: they were not, indeed, violent or displayed; neither were they less obvious for that reason. The younger individual began to think he had fallen in with a madman. But he had

not;—he only looked upon a man whose early sorrows were now called up by incidents and sights which, in such a breast as his, made association and strong recollections inevitable; upon a man whose heart was warped, and whose spirit had been partly broken, or else taken possession of by a devil, in consequence of those sorrows. Oh, little could the cold observer understand, even had he perceived, the nature of the great and true pangs which devoured the supposed lunatic!—It may be added, it was well for him, perhaps, that, ere he and his pursuer had spoken more together, that night, the churchyard had been entered by them.

They were walking hastily out of the little village, by the steep by-road which they had descended to it.

"You do not wait to end our conversation, here?" asked the younger man.

The other stopped, and seemed to consult his own mind, an instant, as if disengaging it from its late emotions, and then answered rapidly, and in a low voice—"No, no, no—not in the hamlet, with so many eyes and ears about; come on."

"I should prefer entering some little public-

house, in the street, sitting down in a private room, and there—"

"It cannot be," interrupted the Smuggler sharply—"I do not know—cannot say—but I may be recognized by some friend of the French *douanes*, so near the coast:—private as the place seems, those persons may be prowling through it—and I have interdicted English articles on my person—though, indeed, I have such articles as these, also," showing the hilts of two pistols, under his cloak,—"just to try and hinder people from thwarting me, to-night, in my humour"—the last words had peculiar meaning in them.

"Then, what do you propose to do?"

"To walk on, as I have told you, the way you came in your easy carriage, to a certain spot which I marked attentively as I followed you, an humble pedestrian,—and which spot I have set down in my own mind as very favourable to the kind of conversation we are to have together."

"It is a house?"

"No, no—walls have ears everywhere, you know—and, by the same rule, so have the hedges and fences we are now passing, at either

hand of this atrocious road: for which reason, let us speak of any other thing but the business in hand, till we gain my chosen council-chamber."

"To be candid with you, Captain, I am scarce able to get on much farther, without a little refreshment: I have not dined to-day, and my run out of Boulogne, till the moment I met you, descending from what you call my easy carriage, has fagged me."

"Let us see, then"—the Smuggler felt under his cloak—"I remember that one of my little boat's crew thrust some sea-store into my pocket last night, where it has remained ever since, without my minding it—can you put up with this fare?"—He presented a small flask of brandy, and some hard biscuits.

"They are welcome," said his hungry companion.

"Well, then; you may sit down on this great stone, and try them; I will lean my back against the fence here, opposite to you, and wait till you shall be ready to walk on."

Both disposed of themselves according to this intimation. The young gentleman, beginning one of his biscuits, glanced across the narrow

road, at the smuggling Captain's face. The moon being at his back, that person was in the deep shadow of the fence against which he leaned, and moreover his head leaned towards his breast, so that his features remained more a mystery than ever.

His guest of the moment continued his plain meal. A low laugh from the Smuggler reached him.

"I amuse you, Sir," said the young dandy.

"No, no—that's not it: I will tell you, really, why I laugh, in spite of myself. Are you a reader of German stories?"

"Indeed I am not," answered the youth.

"You might be as badly employed, then."

"I never, by any chance, read, at all—not a single thing."

"Ah, I forget; 'tisn't sense, now, that business of reading:—but you may have looked into some of the stories I mention, when you were at school, a long time ago?"

"Positively no. People don't go to school to be bored in that way."

"Well:—it was at our resemblance, in our present situation, to a German story, that I laughed."

"Indeed? And what fable of the kind do we so much resemble?"

"Why, once upon a time, the devil——do you believe in a devil?"

The young gentleman only stared.

"Once upon a time, the devil took a particular liking to a certain man, and tried all kinds of bribes to have him. He offered him sacks of gold: 'twouldn't do; the man was rich enough, or, whenever he wished for an extra supply, knew a way, at cards and dice, to coax it out of his neighbours' pockets. He offered him a harem, renewable once a month. That wouldn't do either; the man's chief business, in this life, was making love, and he never yet had experienced a repulse, nor feared the consequences of disturbing the peace of an honest family. These, and many other things, the devil offered, in vain: but do you know what he got the man to take from him, at last?—and how it happened?—He met him, one night, in a lonesome place, after the man had been hunting, all day, and had lost his companions, and his way, together, and was very hungry, and the devil prevailed on him to accept a luncheon at his hands."

"I don't understand; it seems a silly story enough," said the young gentleman.

"And so it is:—But you are now ready to move on"—The Smuggler offered his arm; it was accepted, and they continued their way through the almost impassable road.

"It seems to me quite unnecessary to proceed farther, without settling our business," resumed the youth.

"Hush—on your life, not a word of it, till we can sit down, comfortably, as I proposed to you. But we may speak on any thing else you please; so, choose your topic."

"Then I will ask you a question."

"A hundred, if you like; only not one about the forbidden subject.

"One about yourself?"

"Ay, and about myself, too,—but under the eternal proviso."

"Agreed.—What could you see in the French humbug of that little brat's funeral, a while ago, to make you lose time over it?"

His companion snatched away his arm, stepped aside from him, and became suddenly moved. He stamped his foot slightly, grasped his cloak tight around him, with both hands,

and while his face was turned away, muttered more than once — "Villain!"—Again the person who observed him believed that he was mad, and in this conviction, and under the fear it engendered, let him work himself out of his fit, and stood quite silent.

The fit ceased sooner than he expected. The Captain again took his arm, in a few minutes, and walked him forward.

"Excuse my not answering you, directly," he resumed; "a sudden pain sometimes sets me nearly frantic. But 'tis gone, now, and, I think will not return soon. That little funeral?—To tell you the truth, it gave me a twitch of what some people in the world call conscience—though Heaven knows, I have little to do with such a commodity; 'tis a bad one to trade on. However, I couldn't help playing the fool that time.—We all have our faults—and I am no saint: and, to be candid with you, 'tis only a short time ago since a poor girl, whom I was too fond of, and who was too fond of me, died, giving birth to a little wretch—and they were buried together."

"Your roving life must be a gay one, Captain."

"Why, yes, except for such little consequences as I have just hinted at."

"Don't you take your misfortune rather too much to heart?"

"Indeed I believe so—as the world goes."

"My creed is that, after all, there is no such thing as seduction: and therefore, were I in your case, I would not allow any consequences of such an affair as you allude to, to oppress me beyond measure."

"How do you mean? no such thing as seduction?"

"No; your liking, or your whim, or your passion—certainly, your nature, which you can't help—only gives a woman opportunity, of which, according to *her* nature, she avails herself."

"That seems plausible. But suppose the results are really unfortunate to her?"

"She has brought them on, as much as you have, and ought to share them, and bear them, accordingly."

"So far as shame goes, and loss of friends, and the world's opinion, perhaps?"

"Yes—all that kind of thing."

"If, when her friends throw her off, or from any other cause, she wants—money?"

"Why, in that case, I can hardly see that she is to look to you—that is, exclusively, to you:—I don't mean you should refuse all assistance; but still, I say, as one of the consequences we spoke of before, she ought, in reason and justice, to look to her own exertions, also."

"You seem to have considered the subject:—and *your* life also, must be a gay one, Sir; a young gentleman of fortune, spending his time and his money, at his pleasure, cannot live dull among the soft-hearted sex."

"Not exactly, I suppose"—the vanity of the youth, aroused upon a subject which touches more than any other, men of his years, began to possess him to the extent of the loss of some portion of his stolid dignity:—"for my own part, I have nothing to complain of, on that score,—no more than your successful self, Captain."

"I do not fear it, Sir: and doubtless before now you have stood in something like the situation I spoke of having stood in, myself?"

"As yet—not exactly that: though indeed, for aught I know, at present, the *last* poor girl may, about this time, be in some trouble"

"In England, I suppose?"

"Yes:—when I parted from her for this country, she seemed afraid of what a few months might bring about."

"And you 've not heard from her since?"

"No—I cautioned her against writing, of all things."

"Is she well off, for what may happen?"

"Why scarcely: I fear that a hot-headed brother she has may have treated her roughly, by this time of day."

"Has she any sister?"

"No: nor yet a mother; and the father is old, and poor enough, and was sickly when last I saw him."

"You will go see her, when we land you in England?"

"I don't know; perhaps I may: I will inquire after her, certainly, I think."

"According to your way of thinking on such subjects, she has not, as yet, made you suffer in your purse, to any great extent, I warrant?"

"Candidly, no; I presume it will be time enough *to pay*, when events call on me to do so."

"Suppose—to get your full opinion on my own case—suppose she was—to die, now?"

"I should be sorry—still according to my rule—to half the full extent one ought to be, if her death were one's own unshared fault."

"And if she lives—making you a father?"

"In the first place, unmake myself, as fast as possible, of the fathership."

"How?"

"Give the parish its legal stipend to ease me of the honourable character."

"Well—and in the second place?"

"Let me see:—if she lives, and looks as pretty as ever, or very nearly so—perhaps go and console her: for, to do her justice, she is rather the superior of any of her foolish little predecessors, and one *might* be tempted to continue her reign, for some time."

"Oh God! oh God!" cried the Captain, stopping suddenly, a second time, and spreading his hands over his face.

"Why what's the matter?" demanded the young system-monger, "your pain, again?"

"Nothing! here is our place for concluding our business!"—He caught the youth by the arm, and hurried him through a gap in the bushy fence of the narrow road.

They walked rapidly, often stumbling, over

a ploughed field, which fell into a hollow. They gained its boundary, and proceeded, still descending, over short grass, mixed with moss, and strewed with small stones. The bottom they at last stood in was rushy and moist. They were fully shut up by high grounds, about fifty feet below the level of the road they had left, and perhaps half a mile from it. The descending moon did not penetrate to them, her light was only able to strike the top line of the sombre sweep of land to one side.

"Stand, now, and let us make an end of the matter between us," resumed the Captain, letting go the arm which, to this moment, he had held.

"Is not this strange conduct, Mr. Smuggling Captain?" asked the youth, fear itself making him incautious and desperate.

"You mistake me," answered the other, controlling himself, and standing opposite to his companion, with his arms folded.

"Mistake you? how?"

"I am no smuggling captain. No captain of any kind from this hour; I have done with the character, though it has served my turn."

"You have followed me from Paris, then?"

"Not a foot of the way."

" You have been employed, in Boulogne, to follow me?"

" I have followed you from Boulogne of my own accord."

" Who are you?"

" And is it quite true that you have never suspected?"

" I tell you, Sir, I know you not."

" Are you superstitious—*as it is called?*" continued his pursuer, in a remarkable voice, and advancing close to him, till their eyes met, —" *do* you believe in an existence of whom we spoke on the road?—*or*, will you not, indeed, know me?"

The questioned party, though he never before *had* suspected himself of superstition, felt his flesh grow chill, and his sight fail him, for an instant. With the sudden and weak feeling was, however, mingled the conviction, now stronger than ever, of having seen his persecutor, before that night; and this instantly recovered him to observation.

" Can you not tell me your name and business, at once?" he resumed.

" Look at me again—for 'tis necessary that you identify me, to your own full satisfaction—

I will assist your memory,"—he took off his cap, and lowered his cloak—" and though, indeed, we have been near to each other but once or twice in England, you surely cannot quite forget the features of your poor cousin, Michael Mutford ?"

Young Allan drew back from him, in evident alarm, though it appeared of a kind different from any he had yet evinced.

" Yes, Sir, I recollect you, now," he said,—"-and, what is the meaning of your conduct towards me ?"

" Do not fear immediate danger. My business is not the patching up of an old quarrel, in a way that you once pleaded boyhood to excuse yourself from. I am armed, as you know,—yet I will speak with you, first. 'Tis but lately I came to the resolution of doing so, however. I had once resolved to hand you a pistol, the moment we should meet, and wherever we might meet, and step back four paces from you, with another in my own hand. But now, my mind is changed. It changed, in a degree, last night, crossing over from England in the hope of hearing of you, in France—not, indeed, hearing of you immediately, but when, according to con-

tract, I should have made two voyages, as a smuggling captain, for—my employer, to discharge a sum of money he advanced me; it was then I hoped to find you out. You are entitled to all these details; for you have caused them.

"Well. Last night, for the first time, my mind changed slightly. It changed this night, decidedly; and the 'French mummeries,' in that little church-yard, and the human-nature they moved within me—though once they would have had a contrary effect—were the cause of my final resolution in your favour. I said I would speak with you; and I do, and I will.

"George Allan, you have made me very low. You have shamed me—before that, I suffered nothing. You can never take away the shame from before my own eyes; but you can half take it away in the eyes of the world. Do so; do that, even that, and my hand shall never be raised against you, nor my tongue heard branding you for a scoundrel-villain.—In the person of my sister you have shamed me. Though you may not yet have heard it, learn from me, that, on your account, and on the testimony of your agent, Lucy Peat, Bessy Mutford has been brought to shame before the face

of your own father:"—Allan started, and his alarm grew strong—"and so, you will do one thing, in atonement: you will—marry Bessy Mutford."

"Marry her, Sir!"

"Yes—only marry her, and then abandon her, as you have already made up your mind to do—and she shall never cross your path again—never be a burden to you: and," added Mutford—"to bribe you to this good turn, I think I may safely promise you one relief—the poor girl—child almost—is, I firmly believe, dying—though slowly dying, this moment. So, you will soon be free to make a more brilliant match. Do you promise me?"

"'Tis impossible, Mr. Michael Mutford."—Allan spoke in terror, and his eye glanced round, as if to seek for a way to escape.

"Do not say, impossible;—do not;—she is very wretched; her father is dead;—he died the same day;—why is it impossible?—I do not demand of you, Allan, nor command you;—I entreat you;—why is it impossible?" he advanced, and laid his hand on Allan's shoulder.

"Why, impossible?—you did not give me time to answer you"—he freed himself of

Mutford's hand, and fell back—"'tis impossible, for a good reason—because — because—" he stepped farther back—"because she believes herself married already."

"To you, George Allan?"—Mutford stepped quietly after him. "*Believes* herself married to you?—what does that mean? *is* she not, really?"

"Tush!—what close questions. Good night, Sir"—He bounded against the side of the hollow, Mutford after him. His foot slipped. Mutford knelt over him.

"Up, *now*," he said, "and take your ground before me!—This is all lie, lie, lie, to cheat me, and evade me!—and you thought you could?"—He helped him to rise—"Take that, at last"—he gave him a pistol—"step back *two* steps from me,—I will step the same from you, and when each tells 'two,' fire."

"You *are* mad, to force me to this!" said Allan; "I say, you have no just quarrel with me, on your sister's account!—let me speak!"

"Stop!" answered Mutford, "and tell—'ONE'—"

"One!"—repeated Allan, and fired close to Mutford's eyes, but awkwardly and ineffec-

tually, from trepidation. The bullet only passed across Michael's forehead, touching the skin: but the near flash blinded him a moment, and he reeled and fell.

When able to stand up, again, he was alone. Rage gave him all the promptness and speed he wanted. He sprang up to the level ground, and saw a figure running over the wide-spread land, in the moon-light. The rest was a wild chase. Allan did not return to the by-road, but fled, almost parallel with it, across the country. Mutford sometimes saw him plainly in cultivated ground, sometimes lost sight of him in a wood. He was closing him, however, when he saw him jump from a bank. He followed to the spot, jumped too, and was on the high road to St. Omer, half way down a great hill, with, as far as he could see, a leafless wood, frowning in dark brown shadow, at either hand. A little way down, to the right, he heard a crackling among the brushwood. Gaining the place, he entered the wood by an alley cut or left through it, and opening on the unenclosed road. In a few moments, he saw Allan again. They issued,—after breaking their way through many parts where there was

no path — from the dark and solitary forest, almost together. The pursuit was then once more across an open country, of hill and hollow. They passed the outskirts of a small village, arousing the voices of its watch-dogs. They got into an avenue, leading to a château, — and now they were not more than forty yards asunder; — Mutford heard a man calling him by name; this did not make him slacken his speed; —Allan burst through the hedge of an avenue, into a garden, across a lawn, into pleasure-grounds, through the breach in the fence between the château in which lived Lady Ellen, and that of her sister; and, just then come within shooting distance, Mutford fired; but harmlessly.

The person first recognized by the sisters was George Allan. He ran to them, and caught Lady Ellen by the arm, before he could suppose how nearly related to him they were: it seemed as if he was about to claim their protection, had his hurry and exhaustion allowed him to have done so: his surprise at finding himself in their presence, was equal to theirs, at his sudden and agitated appearance.

Mutford still pursued him, at only a few

yards' distance. Again he heard a man calling him by name, behind, and now he knew the tones of his friend Graves. He stopped. Another person advanced to meet him; he saw it was Mr. Snow, and at the same moment caught a glimpse of Lady Ellen Allan, speaking earnestly with her brother, while she looked, in great distress, towards him. His passion, his frenzy, thus checked and turned, the effects of over-exertion of body and mind seized him, and, as he stood still, his discharged pistol in his hand, Mutford felt stupified, and Graves and Mr. Snow saw him waver from side to side, and stagger. The powder-flash across his eyes began to affect him also, with smarting pain, and dimness of sight. His friends kept him from falling.

He became passive; though, in the intervals of stupor, great astonishment filled his mind, as it glanced at his present situation. He was conscious that Graves and Mr. Snow conveyed —almost bore him, indeed, through a garden, into a house; that they paused at the bottom of a staircase; that there, Lady Ellen Allan, with two other ladies, one young, the other elderly, welcomed him to any attention the house could

supply;—that then he was alone, in a bed-chamber, with Richard Graves, who a second time, within a few days, superintended the comforts necessary for his exhausted state; ordering his foot-bath; a little hot wine, "with a toast in it;" a rush-light, and a night-draught, for his bed-side; and, finally, assisting him to undress, helping him into bed, pulling on his night-cap, and — as cleverly as a professed nurse could have done it—"tucking him in."

Twice or thrice Mutford attempted to speak, during these operations, but was peremptorily and briefly commanded to be silent.—"Hold your tongue, will you? You are an ass, Michael," was the most liberal answer he received, and to his own longest question, of —"What 's this? are we not in France? and you in France, with us, Graves?"

There was a little opium in the wine he had drunk—(and drunk ravenously, too)—though he did not suspect it. Very soon it began to have an effect, and, joined to his former confusion and heaviness of mind, made him almost incapable of observation. He felt Graves, however, taking his hand; the touch aroused him; he grasped the hand close, and sat up.

"What 's the matter, now ?" he asked.

"You"—replied Graves—"you, to be sure, and who else, or what else ?—you are always the matter; let go my hand, man, and lie still, and sleep; you have pulled all the bed-clothes about."

"I don't want to sleep—is that fellow shot dead ?"

"Nonsense;—you grow more foolish, now, Michael; what have you to do with shooting ? what have you been doing with it, this evening, —setting off a squib into your own eyes, I think, and singeing your eyebrows, in this manner ?—Do you remember the Calenders in the Arabian Nights ? you 'll get up, to-morrow morning, as bald about the eyes as any of them; and pray God you may have left yourself even a single good eye, like any one of them: at present, you roll your orbs about vilely; one up to the ceiling; the other to the door; you 'll squint to your dying day: go asleep, I tell you: a pretty bargain we shall have of you, then; leading you about the world with a green pent-house over your nose, if we can't find you a dog;—go asleep."

"No—not this night—" answered Mutford, drowsily.

"No?—Listen, then, attentively, to a case I have ready for your consideration."

Graves put away the candle which he had taken up, to light himself down stairs, before approaching Mutford to wish him a mute good night; then he took some papers out of his pocket, and in a solemn, dull, monotonous voice, began repeating some imaginary preamble of special pleading, in which, without ever arriving at an intelligible point, the same vapid things were repeated over and over. After about five minutes' effort to listen and comprehend, Mutford sank down in his bed, sound asleep.

"I thought it would do," soliloquized Graves, as he once more arranged the bed-clothes. Leaving the bed-room, he encountered, entering it, the professional sister, or old woman, deputed to watch by Mutford's bed for the night.

About the earliest hours of the morning, his exhaustion, and the slight dose of opium he had taken, began both to be slept away, and Mutford half opened his eyes, and half distinguished the face of that old dame,—a very ugly, as well as a very old one—bending over him. He had not power to continue looking at her, or thinking of her, awake, and he relapsed into a

heavy slumber, to amuse his fancy with her, in visions. One of his dreaming conceits of her was, however, sufficiently abominable, to make him start, and become imperfectly awake again. As he did so, he thought that a face and a figure of a different kind, hastily withdrew from his side, and concealed itself behind the thin white curtains, at the end of his bed. A vague but pleasing suspicion entered into him, tutored by which, he first made himself tolerably certain that he was not dreaming still, and then feigned profound repose. His artifice succeeded. The old woman came to look upon him; disappeared at the foot of the bed, and then he heard two voices, whispering to one another, in the lowest key. Presently he was able to catch a sentence whispered by the more gentle voice of the two—"Very well—God be thanked—if he should at all seem worse, before day, be sure and let us know:—" and then there was a soft rustling, and a barely cognizable step, stealing softly, very, very softly; and Mutford did catch, through his hypocritical lids, the side-face of the person who was in his thoughts, as she moved, like a moonlight fairy moving a minuet—(were it possible that merry

fairies ever dance so slow a measure)—to, and through the door.

Without a thought of her brother or her father, the consciousness of her goodness and kindness to him—to him, who had deemed himself spurned and deserted in the world, by all but Richard Graves,—affected poor Mutford powerfully, though, on account of his yet drowsy state of sense, vaguely. He fell into his last sound sleep, weeping—but comforted, and almost soothed, if not happy.

In dreams, however, his mind changed its tone, once more. His old woman wakened him out of what she pronounced, in her experience, to be a bad dream. Mutford was ejaculating loudly, throwing about his hands, and working his features.—His sleeping thoughts had been with his little sister Bessy, and had presented her in appalling difficulties, distress, shame, and danger. Alas! they scarce pictured vividly enough what poor Bessy had suffered, was then suffering, and still had to suffer, in reality.

Though he awoke otherwise much refreshed and strengthened, except in his eyes, which were worse after the night, (though not in the state which Graves had prophesied)—the dream,

and the waking thoughts it called up, greatly affected him.

Graves entered his chamber, to give, anew, a happy turn and flow to his spirits and his hopes.

Having assured himself that his friend was enough recruited in body, and collected in mind, to bear temperately what it was necessary he should know as soon as possible, Graves entered into his pleasing histories. At the statement with regard to the tin box, and its present temporary place of safety, Mutford's philosophy forsook him, and he did some wild and some impassioned things. He bounded out of bed; he embraced Graves; he knelt down; he arose suddenly, uttering the names of his father and his sister, and then wrung his hands and sobbed.

"Where is George Allan?" he asked, changing his tone and manner.

"Returned to Boulogne, before day-break, in the certainty of crossing over to England before day-break, also," answered Graves.

"Safe—unhurt?"—he continued.

"Safe and unhurt, at the moment of his

leaving this house: but, before he left, he and his sister, Lady Ellen, had a long conversation together, by which, as she kindly informs me, he ought to have received no injury, at your hand at least, Michael."

"Indeed!—so, first, I am to prepare myself to forgive—at least not to hate his father; and, now, I am to fall in love with himself? Dear Graves, let us run over to England, instantly."

"After George Allan?"

"No — not immediately after him — but I must see my sister as soon as the space between us will permit—What explanation is it that has so much satisfied you and Lady Ellen?"

"You may find it, at length, in this packet, I believe," answered Graves, handing that which he had received from Lord Lintern for him.

Mutford tore off the envelope—"Why 'tis from Bessy herself!" he said.

"So I thought. Read it; I will leave you till you do so."

"Stay, dear Richard—I find I cannot read it—something has hurt my eyes—take it, and

read it out, aloud, for me—come—no hesitation —you know I can have no secrets from you, now at least—take it."

Graves drew a chair to Mutford's bed-side, and began to read. In a short time the friends were powerfully moved—and Mutford scarce more so than Richard Graves.

It was not merely for the purpose of compelling our readers to keep up their interest, that we forbore to declare the contents of Bessy's packet, when it first came into Lord Lintern's hands. It is on like grounds that we at present, or at least instantly, decline to do so. We rather wished, and wish, to give a copy of it, under the circumstances in which it was written, because such a course seems to promise more justice to the feelings of its writer. In fact, we propose that it be known, at length, while we proceed with an account of Bessy's adventures, after her separation from her brother. And now, no "gentle reader" need be impatient; for attention is turned at once to poor Bessy.

She had besought her brother to stay at her side, in the strange house and town to which he had conveyed her, until she should receive answers to certain letters that she proposed to write

in the view of obtaining, as she said, justice. He scoffed at her, and left her; left her quite, quite alone: whatever she had expected, Bessy had not expected that from him; a sense of utter, utter destitution and helplessness filled her mind; and, after listening to his wild footstep descending the stairs, and approaching the hall-door, and to the noise of the hall-door, opening quickly, and shutting violently, her heart at once failed her, and she fell—not wholly senseless, but more wretched than if she were so.

Though about to become a mother, Bessy was, in some things, childish herself, (yet in no absurd or weak way,) as Mutford has hinted. Want of experience, and living so much alone, hitherto, with her father and her brother,—ignorance of the world, and of the people of it—left her nearly as timid and short-sighted as when she had been but ten years old;—and hence, great as were her other pangs, this night, the feeling of being abandoned to strangers, and—worse—to the vague and unknown, and dreaded ways of a town in which she was totally unacquainted—not to say unfriended—that feeling of itself overpowered her, and she quailed, terrified before it.

But—her brother gone, she durst not conjecture whither—or upon what intent—: her father a corpse, unburied, a day's journey away from her; her husband false and unfeeling—cold, estranged, careless—it must be so, she inferred, after what had happened—and his child soon to come into the world, in obscurity, poverty, and attributed shame! These were the features of the lot and the situation of Bessy, which went nigh to drive her distracted, as sitting on the floor, long after Mutford's departure, she wrung her hands, and cried to God to pity her, in low but heart-touching accents.

Spirit, self-assertion, and, girl as she was, indignation, suddenly changed her mood. She stood up, resolving to begin that very night, the letters she had told Mutford she would send—for justice. One was to be written to Augustus Allan; the other to his sister—his youngest sister.—"I am their dupe," she said—"after all my love for them, and my thinking them the very first of human creatures on the earth:—I am the dupe of their family and their worldly pride—yes, and of their family hatred; on reflection, they have been able to make up their minds to despise and neglect me, because

I am poor, and spurn and wrong me, because I am a Mutford.—More than four months I have now waited to hear from them the tidings of reconciliation between Augustus, and his father, and us—Michael and me—and of right done to my poor brother;—tidings they assured me I should quickly hear:—and, instead, though I have kept my promise and *my* vow—almost my oath, towards *them*, they have broken every engagement, towards *me*. Perhaps—oh mercies! mercies!—perhaps Augustus——but no, no—that, at least, I will not, cannot, do not believe!"

She had begun to utter to herself the fear that her youthful husband might improperly dispose of two important documents, in his possession, namely: the special licence, under authority of which they had been married in London, and the certificate of their marriage. But, as has been seen, she did not allow herself to go on with the thought, even while she indulged in anger against Augustus and his sister, for their neglect of her for many months—their perfect silence, indeed, during that time.

And the reader will, by combining certain things which he has previously read, see that,

even on this account, Bessy had no real grounds of displeasure towards her husband and her young sister-in-law: he will note, that, almost immediately after Bessy had been in London, Augustus was re-captured, and forced home, and coerced as a lunatic, and, before that time, Lady Ellen conveyed by her father to Wales, and deprived of the power even of writing, before she left home.

Bessy was about to ask for pen, ink, and paper. The old lady, her landlady, of whose kind-heartedness and respectability Mutford had assured himself, at once, on his own observation, came in, smiling blandly, and softly rubbing her hands, as she asked if Bessy would choose tea.

"Yes—no—yes—do whatever you like, I mean;" answered Bessy, not able to feel herself in her place even towards so humble a person.

"Thank you, my dear; and I will do for you, all in my power, the same as for my own child, you may rest assured," continued the landlady; "and I make no doubt we shall be good friends, together." Bessy felt a slight degree of consolation.

"There is only one thing I am forced to

tell you, my pretty young lady: I am a lone woman, with one or two daughters, and very poor, though, thank God, no one can say a word against our being respectable folk, that have once seen better days, too; and so, my dear, I must trouble you, if you please, for the money to send out for your tea, and other little things you may want."

"Pray, purchase for me whatever you think necessary out of the funds my brother has left in your hands, for my use," answered Bessy.

"Your brother, miss?"

"Do not call me 'Miss,'" resumed Bessy, "if you please; I look very young, to be sure; and, indeed, I am very young; but I am—married"—And she could not quite check her tears, in the good woman's presence, though she had resolved to do so.

"Oh! married; very well, my pretty lady; very well, ma'am; young enough, indeed, to be married, as you say; though, to be sure, we have very young *mothers*, now-a-days; very well, ma'am;—And the gentleman was your brother, you say?—Indeed, and we had been a-thinking some such thing; we couldn't think outright, that your husband would leave you so much of

a sudden; — And you expect the gentleman back, soon?"

"Not very soon, I believe," said Bessy.

"Then your husband will come along to see you, ma'am?"

"Very likely not."

"But you expect letters, to-morrow or after?"

"Indeed I do not—why ask all these questions?"

"Beg your pardon, ma'am; no offence meant, I assure you; nothing but for your own sake: you spoke of your brother, as you say he is, having left money in my hands for you, I believe?"

"Yes—well?"

"Poor gentleman! he only forgot, in his hurry, I'm sure, and that was why I hoped you might see him, or hear from him again, and soon, or else from some other friend."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean, my pretty dear, that no money has been left in my hands, for your use."

Bessy felt terrified at her very heart.—Hitherto she had not numbered among her woes, the woe of want, in a strange place. When her

brother told her that he had given money for her to her landlady, she believed him, and, on the question of mere existence, till he should come or write again, was satisfied. Now it appeared either that, as the landlady suggested, he had forgotten, in his hurry, or had said what was not the case, to make her tranquil at parting, and until he could really procure money to remit to her. Bessy never dreamt of believing her brother still, and disbelieving the good old dame before her. The benevolent smile on the landlady's comely face, her grave and gentle demeanour, and her respectable appearance, made such an impression that Bessy had not a doubt of her. Let us not chide too severely the want of worldly suspicion and calculation here shown by poor Bessy. The amiable old dame had equally deceived Michael Mutford, though he had often been complimented, even by Richard Graves, upon his skill in physiognomy; nay, it has been proved that she was not unsuccessful, once or twice, in the same way, with people old enough to be his grandfather; and we own that, when we saw her in gaol, awaiting her trial, for this identical piece of cleverness, she puzzled our very selves—

and, after our ingenuous acknowledgment, who doubts her talents?

At her last-mentioned assertion, Bessy, little skilled in checking or tutoring her feelings, for her own worldly interests, betrayed the greatest consternation. She clasped her hands, and asked, below her breath—"Is that possible?"

With much sorrow, she was assured it was true. "Then, God help me! what shall I do, mistress? I have not a shilling in my own pocket!"

"Bad news to hear, indeed," the landlady said, allowing some gravity to mingle with her anxiety and sympathy; "but," she continued, "it was to be hoped that 'her pretty lady' would soon have money, in a letter; and, till then, they must only try and do the best they could, together; and for her own part, she was willing, as she had said before, to do for Bessy the same as for one of her own children; and so, she would just mention a way, if permitted, for getting a few pounds, for present wants,"—and, coughing, demurely, under her hand, she sat down, and seemed to await the permission to go on, of which she had spoken.

"Tell it to me—tell me any thing—" sobbed

Bessy, her face resting on her hands, and both hidden in her dishevelled black hair.

"'Twas likely," the landlady resumed, "that her precious dear had never raised money, in the way to be proposed, before; but poor people, like herself, could not pretend to be so ignorant; and so, if there were any valuable little trinkets that she, 'the honest landlady,' could take to the pawnbrokers—"

"I have not a trinket in the world—but this—" said Bessy, hastily interrupting her, and snatching out of her bosom her little marriage ring, with its guard, which hung by a white ribbon round her neck—"and though it *is* valuable—oh, more valuable to me than the wide world, without it, this night! yet I will keep it—keep it till I die for want of common food.—"

"That?" questioned the landlady—"Bless your precious little heart, it and t'other, together, wouldn't fetch us bread for two days, be they the best gold in the world, what they don't look to be."

"And I will keep it, henceforward, where it ought to be kept," Bessy went on, not noticing the landlady, for a moment, as she untied the knot of the little riband, and put the rings on

her marriage finger—" there—there I will keep them;—they have been hidden, too long;—the world shall see them now; and this, only, I will put up again—" She replaced the riband in her bosom, after kissing it: she brought to mind every look, word, and action of Augustus Allan, when he had slipped the rings upon it, knotted it, and with promises of future redemption, and future happiness, hung it round her neck.

" And nothing of no more value, at all, Ma'am?" pursued the landlady.

" Nothing," answered Bessy—" listen, mistress; once I had some very pretty trinkets, and valuable ones, too; but—my father was ruined in a law-suit—and became poor—and ill, along with being poor, and, unknown to him—I got them sold, and, for a time supplied——oh, father, father!"—Her mind flew back to the distant, the almost squalid chamber, where, that moment, without son or daughter, or common friend, he lay a lonely corpse;—she saw his features fixed in death—in the ever-sealed expression of long suffering;—and, interrupting herself, Bessy yielded to all the agony of the picture.

" Poor dear, gentleman!—and he is dead, at last?" asked the landlady.

" Oh, mistress, mistress ! woman ! woman !" sobbed Bessy, her fit of grief increasing.

Stung by the last words, but not allowing her ill-humour to appear, the landlady waited a while, and then suggested that, perhaps, Bessy could spare a few articles of wearing apparel ?

" I have but a scanty supply of those, either," answered Bessy—" you may see—here is the key of my little trunk"—she handed it, without raising her head.

The landlady soon made use of it. Bessy heard her utter many ejaculations of disappointment, if not of impatience and contempt, as she investigated the poor wardrobe of which it was the guardian. " However, the landlady added, what must be, must be ; and so, she would take just the few articles that there were any hopes of getting a few shillings for ;" and having called them over, like an honest woman, and asked Bessy to see that all was right, she left the room with them, Bessy not having looked at all, but assented to every word—" Yes, yes ; of course ; yes."—The next morning, she found that she had not been left a thing of the slightest value or use, except the travelling clothes she then wore ; and they were poor enough.

She feared, absolutely feared, to ask for writing materials, till the landlady should again make her appearance. The honest woman returned in about an hour, following one of her daughters, who bore in, upon an antiquated round wooden tray, a cracked cup and saucer, a tin tea-pot, a halfpenny-worth of watered milk, in a second old cup, two thin cuts of bread and butter, on one plate, and certain brown sugar, on another. The girl was well-looking, showily dressed,—full-dressed too, with a blue paste necklace, round her fair neck—and seemed watchful, clever, and able to be pert. She curtsied, fashionably, after a manner, and said "Serv'nt, miss—ma'am—I ask pardon—ma'am" —and left the room. Immediately after, Bessy heard loud laughter, below stairs, in which, she thought, a man joined.

The landlady, again without invitation, sat down, and pressed her lodger to refresh herself with a cup of tea; and assured her the tea was precious good: and hoped for all that was come and gone, that things would come right, some day, and soon, with her pretty little lady; and renewed her kind professions of doing all in her power; and—(never giving an account of her

transaction with the pawn-broker) surmised that a little agreeable society might be good for Bessy; and so, her parlour, below stairs, would always be open to her, where she would always ee herself, or one or other of her daughters—who were good girls—if not both: and perhaps, now and then, a cousin or two, of theirs—rich young men, in business, in the town—and very nice young men: or, most likely, one or two days out of the week, a brother of the landlady: a most respectable old gentleman, who had been in the army, and had retired on full Major's pay—and they always called him Major:—and, what did Bessy think of stepping down to a bit of supper, this very evening, and—"Oh no, no, no!" interrupted Bessy—"not for the world! I beg your pardon—I thank you much—but I can make no acquaintances—not for this night, at least—certainly not for this night—and all I will ask you to do for me, is to send up pens and ink—and some sheets of paper—and then allow me to write, alone—quite alone."

Again the landlady felt nettled, again kept down all show of what she felt; and complied graciously with Bessy's request; saying that, of course, she would be anxious to write letters,

poor dear soul, under her circumstances, and wish to be alone, for some time; but, as they *were* to be such good friends together—(the event now taken for granted) — some other evening, perhaps; some other evening:—and she withdrew.

Presently her gaily-dressed daughter re-appeared with writing materials, took away the old round tray, and left Bessy to herself.

At the renewed sound of rather boisterous laughter, below stairs, Bessy got up, trod softly to her door, locked and bolted it, and returned to her little table.

From a sudden change of mind, she now resolved not to write to Augustus Allan, or his sister. They had indeed treated her cruelly—falsely. Of that she became every moment more certain. They would not answer her letters, much less come to her—and tears of anguish and indignation streamed from her eyes at the thought; and her situation imperiously required that some friend should directly visit her and protect her—and who could that be, but her own brother?

To Michael Mutford, then, she determined to address herself. But could she do so, con-

tinuing the mystery in which she had been compelled to keep him? Would he answer her call, if she still refused him her confidence? Could he be expected to do so? With the supposed proof of her public shame in his mind, uncontradicted even by herself, could he? She answered for him — Certainly, naturally not. Bessy would tell him every thing, then; every thing from the first to the last.

True, she had been forced to pledge herself, solemnly, by Augustus Allan, that strict silence should be observed towards her brother, until certain results could be brought about: true—

But it is better to give Bessy's reasons for renouncing her oath, in her own words, to Michael Mutford. For this purpose we transcribe at once the long letter which, that very night, she began to write to him, after much deliberation and argument with herself. It was not finished for some days, owing to interruptions which she experienced, and of which an account shall hereafter be given.

MY DEAREST, DEAREST BROTHER MICHAEL.

In the situation I am at present placed in, and which I fully understand only after your sudden (and oh! how unexpected!) departure, I must sit down and write to you every word you ought to know about me. I must assure you, and prove to you, that your sister Bessy is not what you think her—bad, and a shame to you, and to the name of your family and hers. I must prove to you, that though she has been credulous, her credulity never led her into a greater fault than consenting to keep a secret from her father—(oh dear, dear, adored father! look on me, to-night, with my mother, from your place of rest and reward, in Heaven!) and from you, Michael.

In coming to the resolution of speaking to you, without reserve, I seem to break a solemn

vow. But I do not think or feel that I really break it. More, on that subject, by and by.

You have suspected me, Michael, in common with that wretched girl, Lucy Peat, of secret meetings with Lord Lintern's younger son, George Allan. Listen, however; you will certainly find his name mixed up with what I am going to write; but listen.

The person I am married to—yes, dear brother, married to—let that be a first word of comfort—here is my marriage ring on my finger at last, though I have worn it, for months, only round my neck—that person I saw, for the first time, while we were living in wicked Mr. Wiggins's furnished house.

You remember, that, inside the hedge of the little garden next to the road, there was a little arbour or summer-house. I was sitting there alone, one day, when you and my father —he was just able to go out with the help of your arm, then—had walked towards the sea; —Lucy Peat was in the village, purchasing things for dinner; Mrs. Wiggins had also gone to market, so that, except her old husband, sick in his bed, I was, indeed, quite alone; no

one either in the house or in the garden with me.

I heard some one running very, very fast along the road. I listened, a little frightened. The runner came near — quite close to the hedge; I got up to go into the house; as I issued through the opening into the little arbour, he jumped over the tall hedge like a greyhound and alighted on his feet within a few yards of me.

I drew back. He seemed greatly agitated, and his whole face, person, air and manner, overpowered me. He had no hat on– he was out of breath; and as he stood, for an instant, straight as a poplar tree, before me, I thought, young and slight as he was, I had never seen any creature so noble, so beautiful. His cheeks, indeed, were pale, but that very paleness was beauty; and his eyes, like stars, or like suns of jet, broke, in wonderful splendour, through the clouds of his loose curling black hair — Oh, Michael! do not chide me, nor scoff, nor smile at me, for these seemingly foolish words; I tell you, truly and sincerely, how he struck me, at that very first moment,—what he was like, and how I could not help feeling towards him. Oh,

I did love him, indeed, " at first sight," (as 'tis said, oftener in jest and sneers than in any belief of any such thing,) though it was afterwards, and upon reflection, and from seeing him, and speaking with him, again and again, that I knew I had done so.

Well. He stood one moment, flashing such looks on me! and then he glanced around him, anxiously, and watchfully—and then he said—" Madam—young lady—pray let me conceal myself, a moment, in this garden—I am pursued by wretches who, without any crime or fault of mine to deserve it — wish to do me harm — bodily harm—pray, pray, let me pass into that little arbour."

I know not, now, what I said, Michael, but it was assent to what he asked,—and with profuse thanks, he darted through the opening after me, and dropped on the garden seat, panting and sighing, nay, Michael, even groaning piteously. Yes, piteously; for I pitied him from my very heart—and could I choose but do so, after seeing him in such a plight, and hearing him say what he did? Let me not conceal from you, that when he spoke,—or at least, a few moments after—I thought in my

own mind, I had never, never seen any one of such a fine address.

"I am sorry my father or my brother is not at home to do better for you," I said, in reply to repetitions of his acknowledgements, after some time, when he was calmer—"they could, if necessary, conceal you in the house."

"No, no"—he resumed—"'tis better as it is; the fewer that see me at present the better; and indeed," he continued, rising and inclining his noble head—"I——do not be offended, nor think me disrespectful if I say—I am glad, very glad, to have the honour and the happiness of such a protectress—and such a one, only."

"But, my father and brother," I told him, "will soon come home, for dinner—and then——"

"You must leave me, I know," he interrupted—"Yes, though your going away will grieve me as much as the misery which drove me to you,—I know you must:—indeed, I know that nothing but the greatest goodness and kindness could have made you stay with me one moment;—so, if I can, I must be content, hiding here, alone, till nightfall—though, without you—a guardian angel to me, in very

truth and fact—to watch for me, 'tis hard to say how soon I may be detected, and again exposed to outrage that my soul abhors, and that, as I have already assured you, I do not merit."

"I believe you do not merit it, whatever it is," I said—very foolishly, to be sure.

"Do you?" he asked, his voice so spirited, and his grand eyes burning with delight—"do you, indeed?—God bless you for the word, then; and I thank you, deeply, and while I live shall—*can*—never forget it or you."

Indeed, Michael, while he spoke the last words his voice trembled, and tears dimmed his eyes.

"But why need you stay here, alone, and in danger?" I demanded—"I was going to say that *when* my father and brother come back, they will surely be most happy to give you a secret room in the house."

"Thanks—thanks, again—may I ask you your father's name?"

I told it. He started, and seemed greatly agitated again, though not as he had been, when he jumped—(you classic scholars would say Actæon-like, Michael,) into the garden.

"Mutford?" he repeated — "Robert Mutford?"

I assented, asking if he knew my father?

"And your brother"—he went on, not noticing my question; "is his name Michael?"

I said yes, again, much astonished, as you will easily believe.

"Of Mutford Abbey, Yorkshire?" he still asked; and when I replied, his emotion appeared to change into something grave and admiring: and he held down his head, put his hand to his forehead, or passed its out-spread fingers through his hair—(how well I remember every little action, you will say!)—and I heard him whisper to himself—"Surprising — providential—perhaps a happy, happy chance"—and in saying the last words, he looked up at me, with an expression which I could not withstand, and which I felt to be strange and unusual, though it did not offend me.

"Then, as you seem to know my father and brother, shall I mention your situation to them?" I resumed. "No — no — pray, allow me a moment's thought—no, dear young lady—dear, dear Miss Mutford—excuse me"— I suppose he saw me look displeased, as well as

blushing—"you cannot imagine the right I have to address you so—though you shall know it yet——but I must say no, for the present—to your kind wish to have me taken care of by your family—to have them know we have met—to have them know I am here—for, if they did know who *is* here, alas, alas, I fear they would be little disposed to do me a kindness."

"Why?—have you ever offended my father or my brother? or injured them?"

"Never, I solemnly assure you—never, even in thought; on the contrary, I have been striving to befriend them—even though they and I have never yet met."

"Then, surely, if you let them know that, there can be no doubt of your being kindly received by them."

"There would, though, I am certain."

"Very strange," I said—"such conduct on their part would be unjust and ungenerous—and I will not suppose so of my father or my brother, for one moment."

"Nor do I suppose so, of them; I could not, of *your* father or brother, if I had no other reason; still, let me assure you that they would

scarce protect me from danger, even if I told them I was their friend—their active friend."

"But why?"

"Because they would not believe me."

"And on what grounds not believe you?"

"Because they hate me."

I looked and spoke in great surprise.

"Yes—hate me—and at present they have natural reasons for doing so."

"Without—as you seem to say—having seen you?"

"Without having seen me—I have—or *had*, rather, some friends whom they detest, and they attribute to me feelings towards them in common with those friends.—You still seem astonished, and I do not wonder. I will explain to you—to *you*, at least—another time, if you be good and kind enough to afford me the opportunity. At present, I dread to do so."

"Dread it? that is the most extraordinary word you have yet spoken: what can you dread from me?"

"That *you* might hate me, too"—As he looked at me, saying this in the softest voice, his eyes again grew moist, Michael.

My father and you entered the garden, at

that moment, and saved me an answer—and I was glad of it. I mentioned the circumstance to him.

"Then do not let me keep you an instant from them," he said, sighing deeply—"Do you suppose I shall be free of observation, here, for a few hours?"

I knew he scarcely could. You sometimes sat down in the little summer-house, yourself, Michael, after dinner, with your pencil or note-book; sometimes Lucy Peat went into it, to indulge her moody sullenness; and even the bold Mrs. Wiggins would visit it, though she had no right, and it was her foolish tongue I feared most on his account, if, indeed, he could incur danger, by being betrayed to the wretches —(so he had called them) who were in pursuit of him. These thoughts made me hesitate at his question. But at last, I took a sudden—and you will say—a strange resolution, on the strength of which I ventured to promise him that no one should intrude into the arbour till he left it.

He thanked me again, as I was about to go to the house. His voice struck me as remarkable. It was faint and hoarse. I turned and

looked at him. He was pale as a corpse; his head had fallen back against the thickly-woven branches of the arbour, his eyes were closed, his lips apart, and livid; his arms dropped at either side. I feared he was dying suddenly, and could scarce keep myself from screaming. Not knowing what I did, I ran to him, put my salts to him, to smell, and wiped the cold perspiration from his forehead. It was very strange, I own, to see me so circumstanced, in that little summer-house, with a young gentleman whose name, even, I did not know. But could I help it?—I declare, to you, again, Michael, that I had not presence of mind enough to be conscious of my own actions.

He revived, opening his beautiful eyes upon me, with another sad, sad sigh; when he understood I was near him, he smiled like an archangel, and—without intending disrespect, I am sure, but in a mere impulse of gratitude for my little attentions, took my hand, very, very gently—as the gentlest brother might. Had he been perfectly master of himself,—quite restored to his senses and his strength, I mean—I would have withdrawn my hand from his, of course: but, making allowance for his weak

state, and indeed afraid that my abruptness might give him a relapse, I allowed him to hold it for a moment.

He apologized for the trouble he had given me—thanked me over and over—and while I could only repeat—"But you are better—are you not?" he saw some silly tears which I vainly strove to hide by looking down, and said in a voice that sounded on the strings of my very heart—"What! this for me? this sweet pity for me?"—and before I could hinder him, his lip touched my hand which he still held.

Now I took away my hand, but—I must speak the truth—not in as marked a manner as I ought to have done. I knew I ought to feel and to seem angry, but I could not.

"Have you been lately ill, before to-day?" I asked. He gave me such an answer, Michael, as made me suddenly leave the arbour, to hide the real crying fit it started. "Not exactly ill," he said—"but he had suffered much oppression—even personal oppression, for the last month;—and for all that day, he had been fatiguing himself, trying to escape his persecutors; and that, he supposed, must have so suddenly overpowered him—that, and fasting all day."

Oh, dear Michael, I ran in from the garden, up to my little room, and cried there, as I had not done before since my mother's death.—Yet there was some joy in my sorrow—as we are told that "even in laughter the heart is sorrowful." I once or twice detected myself smiling, while my eyes poured tears, and the beating of my heart, and the tremor of my limbs, were not accompanied with a sensation of unhappiness. I fell on my knees and prayed, too—though I do not know or recollect, now, for what I prayed. Suddenly I started up, at the thought of him, alone in the summer-house, and exposed to intrusion and—weak from hunger. My tears stopped—I bathed my eyes, and went down stairs.

Do you remember, Michael, a day that you called me a foolish little thing, and said my senses were leaving me, because I begged and prayed of you to beg and pray of my father, to let me dine in the garden, and sit out there, till nightfall, before the little arbour, watching a bird that I wanted to tame, and that I said I had tied by the leg, with a soft silk thread, to a branch of one of the shrubs? That was the day I am now speaking of. And now, dear

brother, you know what bird I meant—and you will frown at me for the little equivocation—and so you ought: I do so, at myself.—But you did get me leave to follow my whim, that day; and I did dine off my little work-table, a short distance from the opening of the arbour, and right in the path to it; and Lucy Peat attended me, and whenever she was present, I pretended to be speaking and chirping to my bird, in the arbour, which, I said, I had purchased of a little boy, at the garden gate, and that he was quite a wild bird, and very shy and sullen, but that I was sure I should soon tame him;—more stories, Michael, to be forgiven me—But, when Lucy Peat went away, and that I made certain she could not see me, and that no one else was in view,—what do you think I did then, Michael? Something that I feel myself getting red to think of, this moment, though Augustus Allan is at present my husband—and that I am sure I do not know how I got through, then, for trembling, blushing, and the greatest shame and confusion. Indeed, Michael, I stole softly with my chicken, and my bread, and my fruit, and my glass of water, into the summer-house, and, without even looking at

him, put them down on the seat beside him,—and then got out, again, as well and as fast as I could, not speaking a single word, nor taking any notice of his refusals to eat *my* dinner, as he said,—however he came to know that.

Again, Michael, do you remember coming out to me, after dinner, that evening, and finding me sitting full in the path to the summer-house, pretending to talk and chirp to my bird? and your scolding me for sitting out so late—the twilight had just begun to come on—and your wanting to pass and see my bird, and my beseeching you not, and talking loud and fast to you, and at last crying you out of your intention, and out of the garden?

You had scarcely disappeared when I heard my name called, in the gentlest whisper. I re-entered the arbour, scarce able to walk—though I am sure I cannot tell why I should have been so agitated; but I trembled more than ever, breathed tightly, felt my limbs weak, and my head confused.

"Good night," he said—"only good night: I will not say farewell; it would sound as if we were never to meet again—or at least, not for a long while; and I cannot bear to think of

that; and I do supplicate you to see me, again, to-morrow, on the shingles, by the sea-side, about a mile from the village towards the point, at your walking hour — allow me to say two o'clock?"

I did not—could not answer him a word, a breath.

"If for nothing else," he continued; "at least to hear the explanation I owe you?"

"Well;—very well; for that," I said, at last.

"Good night, then"—he extended his hand, as people commonly do at parting, so, I gave mine—"good night, and I need not pray that God will bless you for your gentle and graceful hospitality to me, this day—Good night—you do not know how much good you have done—how much must flow from your generous conduct. You do not know how much—how deliciously you have comforted a heart that, till a few hours ago, was sore and dark from unmerited sufferings and outrage. Indeed, indeed, to say I am grateful, deeply, deeply grateful, would faintly express my sense of obligation—Good night—you weep for me again? Miss Mutford—But what am I going to say!—Good night—you would hate me for the selfish ab-

ruptness I fear you would—Good night—and yet"—he let go my hand, bowed, at some distance from me, his own hand pressed against his heart, and ended in a low, but never-to-be forgotten tone — "If ever goodness, gentleness, guilelessness, grace, youth and beauty, have inspired lasting and solemn love, in a few hours, *I* love, unalterably, solemnly, this moment."

He was near to the opening of the little arbour, and the next moment, dear Michael, my bird had flown.

You came out of the house to seek me, again, and I told you he had flown, and that I was out of spirits, as you found me, for that reason. How long I had been sitting alone, in the summer-house, until you entered it, I cannot tell. I only know that there I sat, entranced in happiness, if ever a human creature was so. I have told you I loved him, almost the first moment I saw him—Oh, Michael, what pride, what high and delightful pride did I feel at his parting avowal! What a being he appeared to me—how beautiful, how noble, how refined, how spirited,—and yet how gentle! and to think—to feel—to know he would be my own!—indeed, dearest brother, I was a very happy girl.

So happy, that every thing around me, though I but vaguely considered or apprehended any object, seemed making me happy. Now and then I was conscious of the soft night-breeze on my cheek, and it was pleasure; a leaf rustled, and I heard harmony! and, as I sat, looking out, inattentively, through the nearly closed entrance into my bower of—(I know it was) romance, shall I ever forget the loveliness of the planet of romance, and of love, as she arose over the fringy outline of distant trees, and glanced her light into me, through and between clustering and drooping leaves—as if through eyelashes—every one of which she turned into glory! And yet, I recollect all that as if I had not perfectly observed it; as if it had been the moon, and the moonlight, and the sky, and the gilded foliage of a blessed dream; and I like it for its very uncertainty.

These were my first sensations—I do not call them thoughts—I had none—after he went away. When you led me into the house, and I pleaded bad spirits for the loss of my bird, and retired to my room for the night, I had something like distinct reflection. Who was he? why so persecuted? how, our friend?

and without our knowing it? and an object of hatred to you, Michael, and to my father, if known by you?—And I answered to myself—he is a gentleman of the very, very highest stamp, mind, and breeding, and, to-morrow, I shall know his name;—they are wretches, indeed, who persecute him, for, whatever they charge against him, he is surely, surely, incapable of meriting such horrid treatment; and he is our friend, because he has heard of our misfortunes, and because he has a heart to make him the friend of the unfortunate wherever he meets them—and as to his fears of being hated by my father and brother, that is his only mistake.

Michael, you have already called me worse than romantic, childish, imprudent, since you began to read. When you found me agreeing to meet him, by the sea, you laid down the paper, and chided your sister, severely, in your heart. Now, as you find that reflection added only strength to my purpose—I dread to imagine what you think of me. Nor can I offer any excuse for myself. I will not ask you to consider the circumstances of my bringing-up; my total seclusion from the world; my con-

stant reading of books which—(though otherwise good, beautiful and harmless, else you would not have chosen them for me,) *do* nurture the romance of a girl's heart, and scarce teach her caution and incredulity, and common —that is, worldly sense. Nothing of this do I plead. I only say—I only admit that I was infatuated; that he inspired me with a confidence, a sense of his high-mindedness and his honour, upon which my heart reposed, as a child upon flowers;—that the thought of not seeing him again would have killed me: that, in a word, I could have died to save him from an injury, instead of suspecting him for a moment. Yes, Michael, that evening, as I watched for him in the garden, I could have kept off, with my life—if that would have kept off any one, or any thing—whatever person or persons might have come to harm him, in that little arbour.

So, Michael, I went to walk, the next day, alone, by the sea:—and, if my crime was great, it met its punishment, for that time at least. He had been waiting for me, in some alarm he said; and his disturbed eyes glanced up the cliffs, which, at the place of our meeting, were

not high; as he said this, and even while he looked, his emotion increased—and oh, Michael, with cause. I saw two men, of large stature, scramble down the cliff; he started, as if to run from them; his eyes met mine, and he stood still. They hastened up to him, and commanded him to return home, in their company. He refused. They insisted. He defied them—they threatened force; he braved them again; he railed—he reviled—he changed, oh, he changed, dear brother, into the most terribly angry man I had ever seen or could have dreamt of! His voice—his words—his eyes—his erect figure—his raised and clenched hand—can I ever forget them! One of the men advanced to take his arm. He struck him to his feet. He sprang upon the other, and, with one blow, felled him, too. But they closed upon him together—and then, Michael, then I saw him—beaten, beaten, Michael, in his turn, by those rude, strong, great men; and, at last, in spite of all his resistance—all his threats,—nay, and fearful imprecations—they forced him off along with them, while I stood screaming and wringing my hands, in excessive terror and wonder, unable to hear or to comprehend the

full words he tried to address to me, at parting. One speech only I did catch, it was a request not to mention to my own family, or to a human being, that we had ever met, until we could meet again: and at this I heard the savage men laugh, and heard him roar at them, again, until they were out of sight.

You will imagine my state of mind afterwards, Michael. The shocking mystery of who and what he could be, who was thus oppressed and degraded, and deprived of his liberty, in the open day, and in a free country, overshadowed my heart, till it made my love shudder. But I was soon to learn his name and station, at least. You took me with you, in a few days, to Lord Lintern's; you know how his sudden bursting into the room affected me; how the sight of me affected him, too, though he was able to suppress all strong appearance of a previous knowledge of me, (as he afterwards told me,)—asking his brother George who you and I were, with other things.

When I regained my senses, that day, I cannot describe to you how I felt and thought, such a bustle of different sensations of pain and pleasure was within me. You will not think it

unnatural that I was gratified at finding him proved to be of elevated station in the world; the fact also flattered my self-opinion, I believe, because I had from the first set him down in my own mind for a superior being in every way. But it shocked me to see him on such terms with his father; and the continued mystery of the grounds of disagreement between them, and of how Lord Lintern could have the right to oppress him in such a manner, kept me uneasy and trembling. Pray bear in mind, dear Michael, that I was still ignorant of Lord Lintern's relationship to us.

One thing only grew distinct, more distinct than ever, to my thoughts—the necessity of concealing, for the present, from every one, that he and I were friends. The very discovery of his name and rank, and my terror of his tyrannical father, made me become doubly resolved on this point. Indeed, his own last words, when the men forced him off, on the shingles, would have sealed my lips. You asked me some questions about him, and also about his brother — (his bad brother) George, riding home that day, and in answering you, Michael, I first began to dissimulate with you.

Now I come to something very, very disagreeable: In making it clear to you, at once, I shall join to what happened to myself, at the time, facts which Augustus afterwards told me.

He thought his young brother a friend. He made him, in a degree, a confidant. He got him to consent, some days after we were at Lord Lintern's, to convey a letter to me. George Allan gave the letter to Lucy Peat, as from himself, and Lucy delivered it to me, under the impression that he had written it, and that he was encouraged by me in his attentions. She took back a message, in answer, and still George Allan allowed her to believe that it was sent to him. Of this I knew nothing, then, and the unhappy mistake went on, under other circumstances.—In fact I accepted more letters from her, written by Augustus, and messages, also, and still replied to him, through her. It was very miserable that this should have happened: all my late and present suffering—the most odious part, at least—flows from it. And it seems strange, too, that it *could* have happened. But many things helped to cause it, and to keep it up. George Allan, for

his own views, commanded Lucy, as she herself told me, never to mention his name, even to me, but always, in speaking of him, to say "he," and I considered this only as necessary caution; you may be sure I never breathed the name to her; and then the letters and messages I received could be written or spoken in the first instance, by no one but Augustus Allan; so, how should I have suspected any thing like that which was occurring?

I soon began to think indeed, that Augustus Allan wrote to me in a strange and incoherent tone. He complained of the coldness of my verbal answers to him, and at length accused me of forgetting him. This puzzled, as well as distressed me—for, in truth, I had never sent him an unkind message. Recollecting that my words were to be conveyed through Lucy Peat, I chose them carefully, indeed, as a lady ought, but still they were friendly and sufficient, coming *from* a lady. Let me at once explain to you, dear Michael, that George Allan caused this misunderstanding between us. It was his object to divert his brother from thinking of me, and, although he punctually gave his letters to Lucy Peat, in order to continue his main

plan, still he never faithfully reported to Augustus, the messages from me which the girl gave him under the impression, let me repeat, that they were for himself.—I will add, here, that none of the letters I received contained any important matter; no allusion was made to the cause of the extraordinary persecutions suffered by the writer, or to the other topics which were still such mysteries to me.

At length, George Allan endeavoured to draw his vile plot to a close. He sent me word that "*he*"—by which, of course, I understood Augustus—was now free to renew our personal acquaintance, and requested me to meet him at a certain time and place. Fortunately, dear Michael, the state of my father's health made me send a refusal. The intimation was repeated. Again and again, I was compelled to remain at home. Then came a message, through Lucy, which shocked and offended me with Augustus—as I thought; though I ought to have known he never could have dictated such a one. He prayed me to admit "*him*," into the house, late at night. I turned away from Lucy, and did not answer, at all: and this happened more than once.

I have called it fortunate that I was unable

to go out, in answer to the first messages requesting me to do so. It was still more providential that, while I had previously walked out alone, or with horrid Lucy Peat, after the day at Lord Lintern's, George Allan never encountered me in the lonely places I used to frequent. I am sure that if I ever had happened to have arranged some time beforehand with Lucy Peat, that we were to walk together, she would have betrayed me to him—that is, sent him word where to meet us, and so exposed me to his insulting attentions.

Of a sudden, all verbal or written communications from Augustus, or in his name, ceased. This I will here explain to you, also. He had again broken from his father's house, and was known to be secreted in the neighbourhood, though no one could tell where; and the fact made his brother afraid of continuing his odious impositions on him and me, lest he should be detected by Augustus. This was just before you were taken to the Smuggler's house, Michael. While you were there, I saw Augustus often, without the knowledge of Lucy Peat, or of any other person. Our first re-meeting I shall take notice of, rather particularly.

You know the garden, about a mile from

what was our house, at that time, where you and I used sometimes to walk, with the permission of its old owner. You know it is of great extent—the old man and his son cultivating it for the vegetables and fruit it yields, on the sale of which they live: you know, too, that it is well enclosed, very little frequented, and very solitary. I had walked out alone, in the evening—at my poor father's request too, for my health;—(though he afterwards wished me to remain at home;) I was sitting reading, or trying to read, in a corner of that garden, remote from the gardener's house; Augustus Allan walked up to me. He had been secreted by the old man, in the house—or rather by the old man's wife, who is not of that county, and had been his nurse, in another: and he had seen me enter the garden.

His appearance afflicted me, as well as surprised me. He was thinner, paler, and more care-worn, if not irritated, than when I had seen him last. But I did not yield to my interest for him, at the moment. I recollected the unworthy message which I thought had been his, and he saw me changed towards him. He held out his hand: I would not take it.

"Then I was right in what I feared," he said, mournfully, yet, I thought, too vehemently also—"and you, too, forsake me Stop, Miss Mutford, a moment!"—he continued, as I made a show of walking away, not liking his tone, particularly with the impression I have mentioned on my mind—"only stop and hear me! If you do not, you will indeed make me what the world wants to make me, by saying I *am!*"

His manner, and these, to me, perfectly unaccountable words, had a spell in them that fixed me to the spot.

"We must explain, now, or never," he continued, speaking very rapidly, and sometimes his voice had an effect on me like the sound of a trumpet—"You remember our last parting? —Have you since learned who those men were, Miss Mutford?"

I answered that I had not allowed myself the opportunity.

"Then I will tell you. They were my keepers."

"Keepers! what do you mean?"

"Keepers, such as are usually hired to take care of a madman," he answered, his features —above all, his eyes—and his cadences growing

wild and troubled, no doubt at a recollection of what he had so lately been enduring. You will fancy how I felt, Michael. But I did not say a word. I drew back, I believe, my looks fixed on him.

"Yes," he went on, "and I need not remind you that they treat me as the laws allow poor mad wretches to be treated; yes, and my father says I *am* mad; and my brother, and my sisters — except one — and the doctors; and because the doctors say it, the laws vouch it to be true; and so, in the eyes of his family, the world and the law, you have to boast of the acquaintance of a madman, Miss Mutford."

I believed him: nay; I believed more than he wished; I believed the law was right. His vehement manner, never before shown to me, and the change in the very lines of his face, from continual excitement, and even personal sufferings—to say nothing of his extraordinary eyes—convinced me, for a moment, that I had loved, and been beloved by a furious lunatic—and oh, Michael! are you not surprised that the thought left me life, for an instant!

I remember still stepping back from him, and gasping, and trying to scream, but could not,

and the death-like, horrible turn in my heart, until I fell.

A decent and kindly-featured old woman was taking care of me, in an humble but nice little parlour, when I came to myself. He did not appear. I was in the gardener's house, and this was his wife, Augustus's old nurse. She spoke soothingly and respectfully to me, and, in a short time, we had a long conversation together, all about her foster child, Augustus Allan.—Oh, how that conversation relieved my heart !

She assured me, over and over, that, though he had been treated for mad, he was, and always had been perfectly in his right mind, and would soon prove the fact, to the world, now that he had once more recovered his freedom, and was able to take steps to bring himself justice. Who could give a better opinion on him than she, who had nursed him in her arms, and scarce ever lost sight of him—his affection for her never permitting her to do so—from that to the present day ?—No, no, Heaven forgive her, she said, if she believed in her heart that there were reasons for making him out a madman, in the eyes of the world; yes — she added, expressively to me—and reasons which I, and my

father and brother were concerned in, more than we suspected.

This hint reminded me of something Augustus had said to me in the summer-house, in our garden, and I asked her to explain.

She answered that she did not think it might be quite agreeable to him, to do so;—he had never talked to her, on the subject, openly, at least; she had only her own notions; but perhaps I would soon hear something from himself.

That was not likely, I said; for, under all the circumstances, it was better, in my opinion, that he and I should give up farther acquaintance.

"What, Miss Mutford!" she cried, "show him a cold face now, when he has not a friend left in the world but you!—the only sister that loves him, and doesn't believe the things said against him, sent away from her father's house, to keep them far asunder! and his very heart and soul lightened at the thought of making a friend of you!—your own cousin, poor dear young gentleman!"

"My cousin!" I repeated; and now Michael, for the first time I learned that my father and

Lord Lintern were half brothers:—that Augustus Allan was the elder son of the man whom you detested and loathed; whom I myself shrunk from, as the destroyer of us all.

My heart had been filled with a great terror of him when I thought he was mad: now he stood before it, for an instant, as a disliked, rather than a loved object; as he had stood before it, ere we met in the arbour—though then I had never seen him. Yes, Michael, for a short time, I felt as my father's daughter, and as my brother's sister ought to feel. But, alas, only for a short time.

A little girl entered, and put an open letter into my hand. It craved pardon for his ungenerous vehemence in the garden, a few moments before, adding that his good old nurse would perhaps state facts to me which might excuse him. It implored me not to hate him now, when I had discovered that he was Lord Lintern's son; and it modestly added reasons why I should not.—In fact, the hints which the old woman would not explain to me, his letter did. I gathered from it, that he never had been persecuted by his father till he had communicated to him his discovery of certain

evidence which could confer, beyond a question, upon my father, upon you, and myself, the long-contested property then in Lord Lintern's possession: that, although his father disbelieved him, he would soon prove the facts—first establishing his own competence to be a witness in a court of justice; that he was about to go to London for the double purpose; that, inevitably, if his father blindly continued to refuse us our rights, his father's son would confer them on us; that he had delayed his journey, for some days, only in the hope of seeing me again; and now he supplicated me anew to forgive his recent violence, and permit him to descend to me from his chamber.

Believing every word of this letter, as I did, can you wonder that my former feelings towards him should return?—should increase?—that if I thought of him nobly before, he should appear to me as magnanimous as an angel, now? I recollected, too, that it was not his interest for me which had bribed him into his high resolve towards us, even against his own interests and family character—for long before we met he had been suffering terribly on account of his just and generous intentions.

Oh, Michael, at the thought of my father and you relieved by him from misery, I blessed his name in my very heart!

I was weeping plentifully over the last sentences of his letter. The old woman, having watched her time, I suppose, did plead his excuse for his wildness in her garden. He had but just got up from his bed, she said, where he had lain ill, ever since his escape from his father's, to the moment he saw me come in at the garden gate; and he had arisen against her advice, being yet too feverish and irritated to go out, particularly to meet me, of whose cold messages to him, *through his brother George*, she had heard him complaining.

At the mention of his brother, a misgiving of what had been going on started up in my mind. Though you might not have perceived it, Michael, I felt much inconvenienced, that first day at Lord Lintern's by the looks and manner of George Allan, before Augustus broke into the room. I believed him capable of offending me, and since it now appeared that Augustus had made him a confidant, of playing false to us both, in the view of preparing an opportunity for doing so. — My messages, I

concluded, at once, had been misrepresented: and I started with pleasure at the equal certainty that Augustus had never sent me any words capable of making me think ill of him.

"And if I forgave him, would I not see him?" the old woman asked. I hesitated; alluded to his illness.

"Oh," she said, "since he has come down stairs once, this evening, who knows but coming down again may do him good"—And she went to the door, and said, in a loud voice—"Mr. Augustus, why here be your new cousin and your old nurse a-wondering what you can be a-doing, up there."

The old woman led him by the hand to me. He requested me to let him sit with us. I spent a blessed hour, near to him, that evening. There were fruit and some other refreshments, and he talked to me of all he intended to do. I scarcely opened my lips. I scarcely looked at him: but I heard him—and on such topics, Michael!

Amongst other things, he told me he had been writing of me to his sister Ellen—for though his father did not suspect it, he knew the place of her present retreat—and he showed

me an answer from her, in which my name was mentioned, in sweet flattery, because he had praised me. I also discovered from it, that you and Augustus's sister had just met under the same roof—although she refrained from making herself known to you, for reasons Augustus knew; and indeed, dear Michael, she praised you, too, in a way that I was proud of, and that then, alas, made me form, like the child and fool I was, happy hopes in your regard.

I believe one of his reasons for producing her letter, must have been to lead to what followed.—He would explain to me why Lady Ellen hid her name from you — and, at the same time, why he had requested, and still implored me, not yet to admit to my father and my brother that he and I were likely to be friends. — Your hatred of Lord Lintern extended to all his family, he said; and this was natural; still, you hated with such liveliness, and impatience of all contact with any one of them, that if you had, at present, the slightest suspicion of our acquaintance, you would interpose, and make your father interpose, also, to end it, for ever. That, in the first place— (He had not premised it should be first.)

Then, his sister, as well as himself, had strong and natural hopes of the two families being all good friends, together, at no distant time. But, in your immediate state of excitement, did you know who she was, you would detest her, personally; and her sincere sorrow for our undeserved sufferings, at her father's hands, could not allow her to expose herself to that additional humiliation.

True, he might at once make known to you that he was already your friend, and for some time had been. But, in doing so, he should also give, in order to obtain belief, the grounds of his interest; in fact, declare the evidence he had gained in our favour; and, upon discovery of it, even from him, how might your present state of feelings lead you to act?—Would you wait to allow him to proceed towards his point, gradually and cautiously? or would you abruptly and disdainfully, and directly summon him before a court of justice, and spurning all personal conciliation, compel him, at your own time, and in your own manner, to come forward? — While there was a fear, a doubt that you would, he must avoid all communication with you. Though his

father had ill-treated him, as well as you, he was bound to try one last appeal to his sense of justice and humanity — if not a succession of appeals—before he appeared against him, upon a public trial, as an accusing witness; and to ensure the opportunity for this, prudence and good feeling recommended the course he had made up his mind to adopt towards you His sister strongly advised it, too; and so did a most excellent friend of his sister, a Mr. Snow.

One other point remained for my consideration. It was a wretched one. I was aware of the opinions of two or three persons as to the soundness of his mind. Till he could establish his sanity, in a formal manner, he remained incapacitated from giving evidence on such questions as we were speaking of, or indeed on any other. And, upon his arrival in London, his first attention must be directed to that consideration. But for the present, you, Michael, as well as others, might imagine him a lunatic; and so, if you did not embarrass him, as he first supposed, you would laugh at his assertions of being able to befriend you. In this view, giving you his immediate confidence,

would be as useless, as, in the other, it was dangerous.

Need I tell you that I fully agreed in all he said? It followed that I renewed my promises of holding secret these matters, as well as my meeting with him, for some time. He began to suggest, though very delicately, that my love for my father and you might possibly throw me off my guard;—I was a little hurt, I suppose; at all events in a sudden impulse, I volunteered the most solemn vow—I may call it oath, of secrecy.

We parted—but not before he engaged me to say I would see him again, early, very early next morning, in the gardener's parlour. Immediately afterwards, he assured me he should hasten to London.

I kept my word. It was not, I believe, more than four o'clock when the old nurse received me at the garden gate. Now he discovered that it would be much better for him not to go to London till that night, in order to avoid detection: I fear I kept him dallying with his important purpose.—In fact, I saw him after dinner, for a short time, the same evening; and, indeed, Michael, then I urged him to go—and he did.

He has since informed me that he sent a letter to his father beforehand, telling him of his being about to leave the neighbourhood. This coming, of course, to the knowledge of George Allan, relieved him of his forbearance towards me, and I was again troubled with his messages, through Lucy, still in Augustus's name. But now, I never replied to her, at all, and never went out. My father's wishes on that subject were unnecessarily expressed to me: though, I presume, he informed you that George Allan had been seen near to our poor lodgings, indeed even in the back-yard—and that once he had had the assurance to knock at the door to ask after me.—'Tis necessary I should say, Michael, that I did not immediately tell Augustus my suspicion of his brother: 'twas a disagreeable subject; he could not bear the irritation, either; though now I regret my silence.

You returned to us from the Smuggler's house, dear Michael. Remember the conversations we then had together, and you will find them, upon my part, accounted for.—When you first began to question me, I feared you would speak of Augustus. You spoke only of his bad brother. Greatly relieved, I could with

perfect truth assure you that he and I had never met. Yet, there must have seemed to you a strange hesitation and confusion in my manner. Oh, above all, all things, I dreaded to stand before our suffering father under doubtful circumstances, which I could not, on account of my oath, perfectly explain away !—But no, indeed, dearest brother, George Allan and I had never met, then—except once, in your company. Afterwards, indeed, very soon afterwards, he did surprise me alone—and, I believe—by the contrivance of abominable Lucy Peat—very near to the house; — yes, alone; even during the very time I knew you were watching me, on his account; and then, Michael, though he brought tears to my eyes, and blushes to my cheeks, he also brought spirit to my heart, and I replied to him, and left him, as your sister Bessy ought to have done. Lucy Peat met me as I turned home, and pretended to condole with me.

You took me to London, Michael. Augustus soon discovered my residence, and, almost as soon, saw me. The servant girl of the house gave me letters from him, nay—and I now am very sorry on her account, for I be-

lieve she has suffered for it—arranged that we should meet in the parlour, for a few moments, each time, while my old school-mistress used to be engaged above stairs.—Let me go farther, and admit at once, that, in all his letters and conversations, he now pressed me to become his wife, under the strictest secrecy. To gain my assent, he pleaded the chance of our being suddenly separated for ever, by the interference of either of our families, even during the short time that the steps were taking to make both good friends. He dwelt again on the great mutual hatred existing between you and his father, and the certainty—the, to him, dreadful certainty, that if you—(and you so near—) or Lord Lintern—(and he on the watch to find out Augustus)—had a hint of our attachment, something would be done, by one or the other, to make—at least *his* life miserable to his dying day.—Do me the justice of believing, dear Michael, that, girl as I was, I could not, for a long while, bear to entertain in my mind what he urged me to do. Repeated solicitations, however, of the most impassioned kind—his agitation—fears for his health—full dependence on the happy results to you and my

father, from his efforts—to say nothing of what I have already avowed—my great love for him —finally won my consent. I took the servant girl out with me, for a ride; he met us; and, in her presence, Augustus Allan and I were married by special licence.

The next day, he told me that he had obtained from eminent physicians certain certificates, and —had given them to his brother George—just then arrived in town—to convey to his law adviser. I felt my heart sicken; and I could not help expressing my fears that the certificates might be fairly disposed of. He questioned me, as he had a right to do, and, by degrees, got me to confess all I knew of the treachery of his brother to us both.—The lady of the house was spending the evening out, and we had sat, longer than usual, in her parlour. It was twilight; yet I saw the terrible workings of his face.

"Has he been here, to ask for you, Bessy, since he came to town?" Augustus demanded.

I admitted that I had seen him passing before the windows, late in the day. I was speaking, when George Allan walked close by the window of the room we were sitting in. Augustus

knew him at a glance—I believe they knew each other, for George had peered through the glass. My husband bounded out into the street, regardless of my entreaties.—I saw the brothers meet, a short distance from the door; I saw them walk away, a short distance; and then, suddenly, I saw Augustus turn upon him, seize him, and almost dash him to the ground; and I have never beheld nor heard from either of them since. 'Tis true, dear Michael: upon that evening, how many — oh, how many! months ago, Augustus Allan and I had our last interview.

My brother, my brother, my brother, now pity me. You and I have been before Lord Lintern, together, a second time. Oh, I knew that Lucy Peat's experienced opinion of my state of health was true! And oh, Michael, why did I not, at that moment, make up my mind not to regard my vow of secrecy as any longer binding!

Have you learned that, after you left me alone with Lord Lintern, the cruel overseer, and Lucy Peat, I *did* inform him who was the father of my poor little baby?—But hold!—did I so, *indeed!*—The thought starts up, for

the first time—the doubt—the fear that Lord Lintern may not have distinctly understood me.—Let me stop to think—

No, Michael—I am now quite sure that the words I wrote on a slip of paper, and handed to him, were——"*Your son*, and *my* husband—save *him*, as well as *me!*"——and here, you see, I did not name Augustus. And his son George would sooner occur to him as meant, than his son Augustus. For many reasons it may have been so:—on account of Augustus's supposed madness, and his close confinement, except at intervals; yes, and on account of George Allan's character, too, which could scarce be unknown to his father. And then, how Lord Lintern must have scoffed at the notion of such a person—one so cold and cautious, as well as so proud,—committing himself in a marriage with poor me!—

After thinking again, I have decided on a way of repairing my oversight—the oversight of that moment of agony, when my mind and heart, and soul were full of but *one* son of Lord Lintern!—This is what I will do, Michael:—send my packet, which I have now nearly finished, to Lord Lintern, in the first instance;

ask him to read it, every word, and then forward it to you.—And, now that I recollect, I must indeed send it, first, to some person likely to know where you are at present—for, God help me, you left your poor sister quite ignorant of your destination, at the moment of parting, Michael, as well as quite destitute, and oh! inexpressibly miserable!—

And now, Michael, do you think I act unworthily or sinfully in breaking through the oath I made?—Was it not a conditional oath?—To be held sacred only in order to afford opportunities for doing good to you—and to *him* who now can never, never be served by mortal friend, or injured by mortal enemy!—And they told me—assured me, that only a few weeks would bring every thing to a happy ending, and leave me free to resume full confidence with my family; and now, months, months, months have passed away—and where is the happy ending? oh, my father, where! oh my poor brother, where! oh, my unborn babe, where! where!

And—though I have not uttered—and will not utter a harsh word of my husband—what can I think but that he has deserted me!

Even supposing that George Allan did not deal fairly with the certificates, surely the same hands which gave them, could give others like them, and so he would be proved entitled to his liberty of acting for himself, and — if he still loved me—long, long ago I must have seen him at my side. His sister Ellen, too;—*her* cruel neglect of me proves *his* — they were such confidants together. A hundred times, before we met in London, and there also, he has assured me she would be my greatest friend; that she loved me as a very sister, indeed; was most anxious to become quite known to me; and would even brave her father's anger, to come to me, and stay with me, and help to make me happy. But I have not even heard from *her*, either! and notwithstanding all her eagerness to be friends with me, I never in my life saw her but once—and then in your presence, Michael — and by mere chance: — the morning that she came to you to beseech you not to fight a duel with her father—and when you were so uneasy to know the words she whispered in my ear—; which, though I then held from you, I now give you——" I am Augustus's sister Ellen, of whom he has spoken to

you, and your brother wants to destroy us all, by challenging Lord Lintern."

I have done my task, Michael. Oh, why, why, I ask myself again, did I delay it, till now! why, at least, after that last terrific day at Lord Lintern's, did I not immediately tell you every thing!—More than all, how could I be so irresolute, so cruel to you, so criminal, as to let you go away from me, without a full explanation? You repulsed, by anticipation, to be sure, any confidence from me — but that was nothing, ought to have been nothing. Oh, dearest brother, account for my inconsistency, if you can, by recollecting my anguish—my stupefaction—my despair—and yet, amid all, a lurking hope that my word to Lord Lintern would reach Augustus, and that—I don't know how—but somehow — I should at last see him, and have his permission to avow myself his wife!

Come back to me, Michael! Michael, my brother, come back to me! my only brother, and my only friend! come back to me, or I shall utterly perish!—The woman with whom you have left me denies that you gave her any thing for me—and while I write this, Michael, I shiver with cold—for I have no fire; and I

am hungry—for I have no bread! oh, come! come! come!—Even, my little unborn one asks you to come——I *feel* it, beneath my bosom, asking you!—And oh! there are other odious and frightful features of my present lot—— Come!

BESSY ALLAN.

Upon a bleak winter's day, poorly and thinly clad for any weather, Bessy stole down stairs, for the first time since she had come to the house, and out into the street, in order to put her parcel in the post-office, with her own hand. She did not like to trust it to her landlady's care. And, since she had begun to write it, things had happened which warranted her caution.

The invitations to take "a morsel of supper," in the parlour, were renewed to Bessy, after the first night. She was consistent in declining them. The boisterous mirth below stairs, particularly of evenings, nay, late after bed-time, would have deterred her if she had no other insurmountable objections.—Her landlady grew offended and short-sentenced, and sharp-worded in consequence; and hinted that she had no more money to purchase a fresh stock of bread,

butter, tea and sugar, upon which fare, solely, Bessy had now lived four days.

Upon the sixth evening, soon after Bessy had sent off her packet, the comely-faced, and amiably-mannered mistress of the house, knocked for admission at Bessy's bolted door, and her voice was unusually sweet. Bessy got up from her writing, and opened it.

"My brother, the major, *will* come and ask you if he can do any thing for you, my dear," said the woman; and to Bessy's consternation, an old gentleman certainly entered the room, while his sister went down stairs.

The destitute girl, at first so much terrified that she could scarce stand, felt some reassurance from a glance at her visitor. She thought she had never seen a more bland and benevolent as well as venerable countenance. Almost snow-white hairs shaded his polished temples; his mild, weak blue eyes beamed kindly upon her, and his parted lips, — discovering the loss of nearly all his teeth—smiled at her, much as her own dear father used to do.

With many bows, he followed her across the room, after first saving her the inconvenience of shutting the door; and then handing her

a chair, and asking permission to be seated himself, began to say that he hoped she would pardon his intrusion, in consideration of the motive for it, which, indeed, was great interest in her present seemingly friendless situation; —(Bessy burst into tears of agony and gratitude;—) and he went on to let her know that his sister, the good lady of the house, had hinted to him very delicately, Bessy's disappointment in a remittance; and that he just thought he would step up stairs, from the parlour, to assure her that she need not give herself the least trouble on that head; for, as long as he lived, and had the means, no young lady, like her, so very young, and so very charming, should want money.

"And so, my dear," he continued, taking out his purse, and drawing his chair to the table—which movement also brought him nearer to Bessy—"There—and there, my dear"—he put down two sovereigns, very distinctly, one after the other; "and there"— another, as he turned and smiled more graciously than ever; —"and there,—and there, my pretty little charmer:"—and now the sovereigns were all in a row.

Bessy, without at first suspecting any thing else, did not like the ostentation of the benevolent old major, and so, she sat still, and neither took the sovereigns, nor returned thanks for them.

"And now, my dear," he resumed, drawing still closer to her—"do I deserve no little compliment?"

He accompanied these words with an action—or rather an attempted action—at which Bessy sprang up, and ran to the door. The polite old philanthropist had locked it, as well as saved her the trouble of shutting it. Her voice was an uninterrupted hysteric of screaming. She ran to a window, and cried out to the people in the street; and this saved her from the momentary inconvenience of the hoary villain's presence. But it also brought up his "sister," who, her exquisite mask torn off, now showed herself to her poor lodger in the true nature of the monster she was. Revenge she vowed and swore. Bessy offered to escape from the house:—no! not till she had paid for her lodging!—and her own door was now locked on the outside, and she was left alone.

Lord Lintern and his elder son took their journey together. At within about thirty miles of their destination, while they travelled at the utmost speed, the postilions stopped, on the outskirts of a small village, to water the horses. Their attention became directed to a crowd which surrounded the door of a very wretched house, contrived against the fence, to one side of the road. Words of pity, at one moment, of indignation, at another, escaped men and women, old and young. Augustus, particularly, felt interested. He called out of the carriage window, asking what was the matter. The crowd divided, before the door, as a woman answered, "I will tell you, gentlemen," and she came to the carriage, weeping and sobbing, and her story was this.—

"A poor soul, with child, had been brought through the village, to the next town, the day

before, by the parish officers of another town, a great way off, where she had been living, destitute, only a few days." The officers took her at her word that the town, at present near at hand, was in her parish, though now it was thought she gave them incorrect information, to avoid the shame of appearing among her friends: — "Well, gentlemen," continued the woman, "the parish folk of our town wouldn't have nothing at all to do with her, but sent her back to the place she came from, quite sure, they said, that she had a settlement there;— and the parish folk, there, turned her off a second time; and she has been forwarded from parish to parish, till we saw her passing by, to-day again, a-foot, and almost barefoot, and quite spent, and tottering, till she fell, just there, at the door of my poor house; and my husband and I, though we are paupers ourselves, were forced to lift her up—we couldn't look at her, and help doing it; and see—there she lies, inside the threshold, more dead than alive, I fear."

During this recital, the father and the son interchanged fearful looks of misgiving.

"You deserve something for having kept

a heart in spite of the parish," said Augustus, giving the woman money——"And now let *me* see this poor girl."

"Augustus—stop, a moment"—whispered Lord Lintern—"and do not look so doubtingly at me—but see if I shall not arrange it better, supposing—what I know you fear.—She shall enter the carriage, along with us, this moment, whoever she is. *If* she be the person we are travelling to seek, the precaution will save us the public disgrace of recognizing her, at present."

To this characteristic speech of his father—improved and corrected man as he was—Augustus impatiently submitted. The wanderer was lifted by the people, a dead weight, into the carriage.

Though recognized at once, she saw no one; was conscious of nothing: and days of insensibility, produced by fever, succeeded. But when she could take notice of her situation, and of the first face she saw at her bedside, poor Bessy said to herself—"Ah, I dream—I dream, asleep yet, on my straw, and in my rags, and cold and hungry."—But she soon knew that her luxurious and finely-dressed bed, and the happy warmth of her limbs, her sense of relief.

and the smell of perfumes, were real; and that she was indeed watched by her gentle young sister-in-law.

Nor was it long till other faces smiled, successively, at her bed-side; her brother's; her husband's; nay, and her husband's father's; and it pleased Him who "tempers the winds of Heaven to the shorn lamb," to ordain that all the attentions of parish law did not succeed in preventing poor Bessy from being, in good time, a happy, a delighted, and, on all hands, a flattered mother.

As to some other persons—directly upon the marriage of Michael Mutford, and Lady Ellen Allan, we will send a circular, intimating the event to our readers; Richard Graves wishes to give his friend away, thinking it his right, he says, to get rid of Michael, after all the trouble he has cost him, by the unquestionable proof of the agency of his own hand.

THE END.

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